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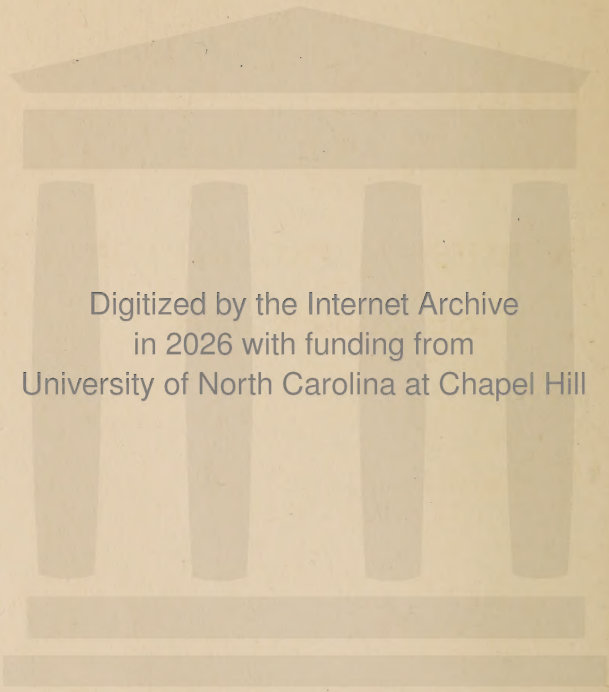
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A RUSSIAN PROPRIETOR

AND OTHER STORIES

FACE TO FACE WITH *IT*

From a drawing by T. V. Chominski

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THE WORKS OF LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

A RUSSIAN PROPRIETOR
THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYITCH

AND OTHER STORIES

BY

LYOF N. TOLSTOÏ

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1929

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INTRODUCTION

SIX of the narratives included in the present volume are representative of Count Tolstoï's literary activity in the years 1856, 1857, and 1859; the first, which gives the volume its name, is of earlier date, having been written in 1852, the same year as "Childhood, Boyhood, and Youth." Literally translated, the title, *Utro Pomyeshchika*, means "A Proprietor's Morning," and was probably intended as a part of a projected novel; but it is complete in itself, representing the experiences of a conscientious young Russian in dealing with his serfs, endeavoring to lift them from their degradation, and finding their ingrained obstinacy and conservatism too powerful to overcome. One cannot help feeling that it is autobiographical, or at least founded on similar experiences. Count Tolstoï, it will be remembered, having suddenly quitted the University of Kazan, in spite of the entreaties of his friends, and retired to his paternal estate of Yasnaya Polyana near Tula. The aunt, whose letter is cited in the first chapter, must have been Tolstoï's aunt mentioned in the second chapter of "My Confession."

The "Recollections of a Billiard-marker" and "Two Hussars" are both evidently reminiscent of Count Tolstoï's gambling days. Both must have been suggested by some such terrible experience as that told of his gambling debt in the Caucasus. The style of the first is peculiarly rugged and staccato, with a quite wonderful skill in reproducing the slang of the billiard-saloon. The other is a powerful delineation of the contrast between the dissipated, high-handed, bold hussar of the early days, with his freaks of generosity, with his nobility and gallantry, and his son, no less dissipated, but mean, contemptible, and narrow.

"Lucerne" and "Albert" are likewise evidently tran-

scripts from the author's own experiences. The Quixotic benefactor, the autobiographic Prince Nekhliudof, who in the one case patronizes the strolling Swiss singer and in the other tries to rescue the drunken violinist from himself, is Count Tolstoï.

"Family Happiness" is a romance complete in itself. It is the autobiography of a young, passionate, and susceptible woman, who, being thrown into the society of her guardian, marries him, and too late discovers that the love which she has to bestow is met by a philosophic liking so cold as thoroughly to disenchant her. She narrowly escapes shipwreck, not through any inherent badness, but by the force of inertia, which lets her drift with the stream toward the chasm of illicit passion. She wins a certain serenity, and happiness returns in her acceptance of the inevitable and in her devotion to duty. It is a wonderful study of a woman's soul, and is the most poetic of Count Tolstoï's works; it is shot through and through with the music of nightingales.

In interesting contrast to these characteristic stories is the little gem entitled *Kavkazsky Plyennik*, or "A Prisoner in the Caucasus." It is founded on a personal experience thus related by Count Tolstoï's brother-in-law, C. H. Behrs, in his "Recollections": —

"A certain Sodo, of the tribe of the Tchetchenians, and with whom the count was on friendly terms, had bought a young horse, and one day proposed to him to take a ride into the country surrounding the fortress, where the detachment of the Russian army in which he then served was posted. Two other officers of the artillery joined the party. Though all such excursions had been strictly forbidden by the military authorities in consequence of the serious dangers with which they were accompanied, not one of them, except Sodo, was furnished with any other weapon than the ordinary Circassian saber. Having tried his own horse, Sodo begged his friend to mount it, and himself leaped on the count's trotter, which, of course, was no good at a fast gallop. They were already about five versts from the fortress when suddenly they saw close before them a band of Tchetchenians, some

twenty in number. The Tchetchenians began to pull their guns from their covers, and divided themselves into two parties. One-half of them set off in chase of the two officers, who were already making what speed they could back to the fortress, and soon overtook them. One of the officers was pulled from his horse and hacked to pieces; the other was taken prisoner. Sodo, followed by Lyof Nikolayevitch, pushed off in another direction toward a Cossack picket that was posted at about a verst distant. Their pursuers were close upon them, and there was nothing before them but death or captivity, with its usual accompaniment, to be put into a pit neck high and left there to starve, for the mountaineers were noted for their cruel treatment of the unlucky wretches who fell into their hands. It was possible for Lyof Nikolayevitch to escape on his friend's swift-footed steed, but he would not abandon him. Sodo, like a true mountaineer, had not failed to bring his gun with him, but unfortunately it was unloaded. He none the less aimed at his pursuers, and with a wild cry of defiance made as if he were on the point of firing. To judge from what followed, we may presume it was their intention to take them both prisoners, in order that they might better revenge themselves on Sodo. At any rate they none of them fired. It was this alone that saved their lives. They managed to get within sight of the picket, whence the sharp-eyed sentry had from a distance seen the danger they were in, and instantly gave the alarm. The Cossacks soon turned out, and before long compelled the Tchetchenians to cease their pursuit."

The style is perfectly simple and lucid; the pictures of life in the Tartar aul among the mountains are intensely vivid, painted with strong masterly touches; the heroism of the young officer in standing by his friend and fellow-captain is most affecting, and the reader will not soon forget the little black-eyed laughing maiden Dina, with the rubles jingling in her braided hair. She stands forth as one of the most fascinating of the author's creations, as the story itself is one that well deserves to be called classic.

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A RUSSIAN PROPRIETOR

CHAPTER I

PRINCE NEKHLIUDOF was nineteen years of age when, at the end of his third term at the university, he came to spend his summer vacation on his estate, and was alone there all summer.

In the autumn he wrote, in his unformed boyish hand, a letter to his aunt, the Countess Bieloretsky, who, according to his notion, was his best friend, and the most talented woman in the world. The letter was in French, and was to the following effect: —

DEAR AUNT, — I have adopted a resolution on which must depend the fate of my whole existence. I have left the university in order to devote myself to a country life, because I feel that I was born for it. For God's sake, dear aunt, don't make sport of me. You say that I am young. Perhaps I am still almost a child; but this does not prevent me from feeling sure of my vocation, from wishing to accomplish it successfully, and from loving it.

As I have already written you, I found our affairs in indescribable confusion. Wishing to bring order out of chaos, I made an investigation, and discovered that the principal trouble was due to the most wretched, miserable condition of the peasants, and that this trouble could be remedied only by work and patience.

If you could only see two of my peasants, David and Ivan, and the way they and their families live, I am convinced that one glance at these two unfortunates would do more to persuade you than all I can tell you in justification of my resolve. Is not my obligation sacred and clear, to labor for the welfare of these seven hundred human beings for whom I must be responsible to God? Would it not be a sin to leave them to the mercy of

harsh elders and overseers, so as to carry out plans of enjoyment or ambition? And why should I seek in any other sphere the opportunity of being useful, and doing good, when such a noble, brilliant, and paramount duty lies right at hand?

I feel that I am capable of being a good manager[1] and in order to make myself such a one as I understand the word to mean, I do not need my diploma as "candidate" or the rank which you so expect of me. Dear aunt, do not make ambitious plans for me; accustom yourself to the thought that I am going on an absolutely peculiar path, but one that is good, and, I think, will bring me to happiness. I have thought and thought about my future duties, have written out some rules of conduct, and, if God only gives me health and strength, I shall succeed in my undertaking.

Do not show this letter to my brother Vasya; I am afraid of his ridicule. He generally dictates to me, and I am accustomed to give way to him. Whilst Vanya may not approve of my resolve, at least he will understand it.

The countess replied to her nephew in the following letter, also written in French: —

Your letter, dear Dmitri, showed nothing else to me than that you have a warm heart; and I have never had reason to doubt that. But, my dear, our good qualities do us more harm in life than our bad ones. I will not tell you that you are committing a folly, that your behavior annoys me; but I will do my best to make one argument have an effect on you. Let us reason together, my dear.

You say you feel that your vocation is for a country life; that you wish to make your serfs happy, and that you hope to be a good manager.

In the first place, I must tell you that we feel sure of our vocation only when we have once made a mistake in one; secondly, that it is easier to win happiness for ourselves than for others; and thirdly, that, in order to be a good master, it is necessary to be a cold and austere man, which you will never in this world succeed in being, even though you strive to make believe that you are.

You even consider your arguments irresistible, and go so far as to adopt them as rules for the conduct of life; but at my age, my dear, people don't care for arguments and rules, but only

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

for experience. Now, experience tells me that your plans are childish.

I am now in my fiftieth year, and I have known many fine men; but I have never heard of a young man of good family and ability burying himself in the country under the pretext of doing good.

You have always wished to appear original, but your originality is nothing else than morbidly developed egotism. And, my dear, choose some better-trodden path. It will lead you to success; and success, if it is not necessary for you as success, is at least indispensable in giving you the possibility of doing good which you desire. The poverty of a few serfs is an unavoidable evil, or, rather, an evil which cannot be remedied by forgetting all your obligations to society, to your relatives, and to yourself.

With your intellect, with your kind heart, and your love for virtue, no career would fail to bring you success; but at all events choose one which would be worth your while, and bring you honor.

I believe that you are sincere, when you say that you are free from ambition; but you are deceiving yourself. Ambition is a virtue at your age, and with your means; it becomes a fault and an absurdity when a man is no longer in the condition to satisfy this passion.

And you will experience this if you do not change your intention. Good-by, dear Mitya. It seems to me that I have all the more love for you on account of your foolish but still noble and magnanimous plan. Do as you please, but I forewarn you that I shall not be able to sympathize with you.

The young man read this letter, considered it long and seriously, and finally, having decided that his genial aunt might be mistaken, sent in his petition for dismissal from the university, and took up his residence on his estate.

CHAPTER II

The young proprietor had, as he wrote his aunt, devised a plan of action in the management of his estate; and his whole life and activity were measured by hours, days, and months.

Sunday was reserved for the reception of petitioners, domestic servants, and peasants, for the visitation of the poor serfs belonging to the estate, and the distribution of assistance with the approval of the Commune, which met every Sunday evening, and was obliged to decide who should have help, and what amount should be given.

In such employments more than a year passed, and the young man was now no longer a novice either in the practical or theoretical knowledge of estate management.

It was a clear June Sunday when Nekhliudof, having finished his coffee and run through a chapter of "Maison Rustique," put his note-book and a packet of bank-notes into the pocket of his light overcoat, and started out of doors. It was a great country house with colonnades and terraces where he lived, but he occupied only one small room on the ground floor. He made his way over the neglected, weed-grown paths of the old English garden, toward the village, which was distributed along both sides of the highway.

Nekhliudof was a tall, slender young man, with long, thick, wavy auburn hair, with a bright gleam in his dark eyes, and a clear complexion, and rosy lips where the first down of young manhood was now beginning to appear.

In all his motions and gait could be seen strength, energy, and the good-natured self-satisfaction of youth.

The serfs, in variegated groups, were returning from church: old men, maidens, children, mothers with babies in their arms, dressed in their Sunday best, were scattering to their homes; and as they met the barin they bowed low and made room for him to pass.

After Nekhliudof had walked some distance along the street, he stopped, and drew from his pocket his note-book, on the last page of which, inscribed in his own boyish hand, were several names of his serfs with memoranda. He read, "*Ivan Churisenok*[1] *asks for aid;*" and

[1] Diminutive of Churis; the *e* on which falls the stress is pronounced like *yo*.

then, proceeding still farther along the street, entered the gate of the second *izba*, or cottage, on the right.

Churisenok's domicile consisted of a half-decayed structure, with musty "corners," as the rooms are called; the sides were rickety. It was so buried in the ground, that the banking, made of earth and dung, almost hid the two windows. The one on the front had a broken sash, and the shutters were half torn away; the other was small and low, and was stuffed with flax. A boarded entry with rotting sills and low door, another small building still older and still lower-studded than the entry, a gate, and a wattled closet were clustered about the principal izba.

All this had once been covered by one irregular roof; but now only over the eaves hung the thick straw, black and decaying. Above, in places, could be seen the framework and rafters.

In front of the yard were a well with rotten curb, the remains of a post, and the wheel, and a mud-puddle stirred up by the cattle, where some ducks were splashing.

Near the well stood two old willows, split and broken, with their whitish green foliage. They were witnesses to the fact that some one, sometime, had taken interest in beautifying this place. Under one of them sat a fair-haired girl of seven summers, watching another little girl of two, who was creeping at her feet. The watch-dog, gamboling about them, as soon as he saw the barin, flew headlong under the gate, and there set up a quavering yelp expressive of panic.

"Is Ivan at home?" asked Nekhliudof.

The little girl seemed stupefied at this question, and kept opening her eyes wider and wider, but made no reply. The baby opened her mouth and set up a yell.

A little old woman, in a torn checkered skirt, belted low with an old red girdle, peered out of the door, and also said nothing. Nekhliudof approached the entry, and repeated his inquiry.

"Yes, he 's at home, benefactor," replied the little old

woman, in a harsh voice, bowing low, and growing more and more scared and agitated.

After Nekhliudof had asked after her health, and passed through the entry into the narrow yard, the old woman, resting her chin in her hand, went to the door, and, without taking her eyes off the barin, began gently to shake her head.

The yard was in a wretched condition, with heaps of old blackened manure that had not been carried away; on the manure were thrown in confusion a rotting block, pitchforks, and two harrows.

There were penthouses around the yard, under one side of which stood a *sokha*, or peasants' wooden plow, a cart without wheels, and a pile of empty good-for-nothing beehives thrown upon one another. The roof was in disrepair; and one side had fallen in so that the covering in front rested, not on the supports, but on the manure.

Churisenok, with the edge and head of an ax, was breaking off the wattles that strengthened the roof. Ivan Churis was a peasant, fifty years of age, of less than the ordinary stature. The features of his tanned oval face, framed in a dark auburn beard and hair where a trace of gray was beginning to appear, were handsome and expressive. His dark blue eyes gleamed with intelligence and lazy good-nature, from under half-shut lids. His small, regular mouth, sharply defined under his sandy, thin mustache when he smiled, betrayed a calm self-confidence, and a certain bantering indifference toward all around him.

By the roughness of his skin, by his deep wrinkles, by the veins that stood out prominently on his neck, face, and hands, by his unnatural stoop and the crooked position of his legs, it was evident that all his life had been spent in hard work, far beyond his strength.

His garb consisted of white hempen drawers, with blue patches on the knees, and a dirty shirt of the same material, which kept hitching up his back and arms. The shirt was belted low in the waist by a girdle, from which hung a brass key.

"Good-day,"[1] said the barin, as he stepped into the yard.

Churisenok glanced around, and kept on with his work; making energetic motions, he finished clearing away the wattles from under the shed, and then only, having struck the ax into the block, he came out into the middle of the yard.

"A pleasant holiday, your excellency!" said he, bowing low and smoothing his hair.

"Thanks, my friend. I came to see how your affairs[2] were progressing," said Nekhliudof, with boyish friendliness and timidity, glancing at the peasant's garb. "Just show me what you need in the way of supports that you asked me about at the last meeting."

"Supports, of course, sir, your excellency, sir.[3] I should like it fixed a little here, sir, if you will have the goodness to cast your eye on it; here this corner has given way, sir, and only by the mercy of God the cattle did n't happen to be there. It barely hangs at all," said Churis, gazing with an expressive look at his broken-down, ramshackly, and ruined sheds. "Now the girders and the supports and the rafters are nothing but rot; you won't see a sound timber. But where can we get lumber nowadays, I should like to know?"

"Well, what do you want with the five supports when the one shed has fallen in? The others will be soon falling in too, won't they? You need to have everything made new, rafters and girders and posts; but you don't want supports," said the barin, evidently priding himself on his comprehension of the case.

Churis made no reply.

"Of course you need lumber, but not supports. You ought to have told me so."

"Surely I do, but there 's nowhere to get it. Not all of us can come to the manor-house. If we all should get into the habit of coming to the manor-house and asking your excellency for everything we wanted, what kind of serfs should we be? But if your kindness went

[1] *Bog pomoshch';* literally, God our help.
[2] *Khozyaïstvo.* [3] *Batyushka vashe siyatelstvo.*

so far as to let me have some of the oak saplings that are lying idle over by the threshing-floor," said the peasant, making a low bow and scraping with his foot, "then, maybe, I might exchange some, and piece out others, so that the old would last some time longer."

"What is the good of the old? Why, you just told me that it was all old and rotten. This part has fallen in to-day; to-morrow that one will; the day after, a third. So, if anything is to be done, it must be all made new, so that the work may not be wasted. Now tell me what you think about it. Can your premises[1] last out this winter, or not?"

"Who can tell?"

"No, but what do you think? Will they fall in, or not?"

Churis meditated for a moment.

"Can't help falling in," said he, suddenly.

"Well, now you see you should have said that at the meeting, that you needed to rebuild your whole place,[1] instead of a few props. You see I should be glad to help you."

"Many thanks for your kindness," replied Churis, in an incredulous tone and not looking at the barin. "If you would give me four joists and some props, then, perhaps, I might fix things up myself; but if any one is hunting after good-for-nothing timbers, then he'd find them in the joists of the hut."

"Why, is your hut so wretched as all that?"

"My old woman and I are expecting it to fall in on us any day," replied Churis, indifferently. "A day or two ago a girder fell from the ceiling and struck my old woman."

"What! struck her?"

"Yes, struck her, your excellency; hit her on the back, so that she lay half dead all night."

"Well, did she get over it?"

"Pretty much, but she's been ailing ever since; but then she's always ailing."

"What, are you sick?" asked Nekhliudof of the old

[1] *Dvor.*

woman, who had been standing all the time at the door, and had begun to groan as soon as her husband mentioned her.

"It bothers me here more and more, especially on Sundays," she replied, pointing to her dirty, lean bosom.

"Again?" asked the young master, in a tone of vexation, shrugging his shoulders. "Why, if you are so sick, don't you come and get advice at the dispensary? That is what the dispensary was built for. Haven't you been told about it?"

"Certainly we have, benefactor, but I have not had any time to spare; have had to work in the field, and at home, and look after the children, and no one to help me; if I weren't all alone...."

CHAPTER III

NEKHLIUDOF went into the hut. The uneven smoke-begrimed walls of the dwelling were hung with various rags and clothes, and, in the living-room, were literally covered with reddish cockroaches clustering around the holy images and benches.

In the middle of this dark, fetid apartment, not fourteen feet square, was a huge crack in the ceiling; and, in spite of the fact that it was braced up in two places, the ceiling hung down so that it threatened to fall from moment to moment.

"Yes, the hut is very miserable," said the barin, looking into the face of Churisenok, who, it seems, had not cared to speak first about this state of things.

"It will crush us to death; it will crush the children," said the woman, in a tearful voice, attending to the stove which stood under the loft.

"Hold your tongue," cried Churis, sternly; and with a subtle, almost imperceptible smile playing under his quivering mustaches, he turned to the master. "And I haven't the wit to know what's to be done with it, your excellency,—with this hut and props and planks. There's nothing to be done with them."

"How can we live through the winter here? *Okh, okh!* — Oh, oh!" groaned the old woman.

"There's one thing — if we put in some more props and laid a new floor," said the husband, interrupting her with a calm, practical expression, "and threw over one set of rafters, then perhaps we might manage to get through the winter. It is possible to live; but you'd have to put some props all over the hut, like that; but if it gets shaken, then there won't be anything left of it. As long as it stands, it holds together," he concluded, evidently perfectly contented that he appreciated this contingency.

Nekhliudof was both vexed and grieved that Churis had got himself into such a condition, without having come to him long before; since he had more than once, during his sojourn on the estate, told the peasants, and insisted on it, that they should all apply directly to him for whatever they needed.

He now felt some indignation against the peasant; he angrily shrugged his shoulders, and frowned. But the sight of the poverty in the midst of which he found himself, and Churis's calm and self-satisfied appearance in contrast with this poverty, changed his vexation into a sort of feeling of melancholy and hopelessness.

"Well, Ivan, why on earth didn't you tell me about this before?" he asked, in a tone of reproach, as he took a seat on the filthy, unsteady bench.

"I didn't dare to, your excellency," replied Churis, with the same scarcely perceptible smile, shuffling with his black, bare feet over the uneven surface of the mud floor; but this he said so fearlessly and with such composure, that it was hard to believe that he had any timidity about going to his master.

"We are mere peasants; how could we be so presuming?" began the old woman, sobbing.

"Hush up," said Churis, again addressing her.

"It is impossible for you to live in this hut; it's all rotten," cried Nekhliudof, after a brief silence. "Now, this is how we shall manage it, my friend."[1] ....

[1] *Bratyets*, brother.

"I will obey," replied Churis.

"Have you seen the improved stone cottages that I have been building at the new farm, — the ones with the undressed walls?"

"Indeed, I have seen them," replied Churis, with a smile which showed his white teeth still unimpaired. "Everybody's agog at the way they're built. Fine cottages! The boys were laughing, and wondering if they would n't be turned into granaries; they would be so secure against rats. Fine cottages," he said, in conclusion, with an expression of absurd perplexity, shaking his head, "just like a jail!"

"Yes, they're splendid cottages, dry and warm, and no danger of fire," replied the barin, a frown crossing his youthful face, for he was evidently annoyed at the peasant's sarcasm.

"Without question, your excellency, fine cottages."

"Well, then, one of these cottages is just finished. It is twenty-four feet square, with an entry and a barn, and it's entirely ready. I will let you have it on credit if you say so, at cost price; you can pay for it at your own convenience," said the barin, with a self-satisfied smile, which he could not control, at the thought of his benevolence. "You can pull down this old one," he went on to say; "it will make you a granary. We will also move the pens. The water there is splendid. I will give you enough land for a vegetable-garden, and I'll let you have a strip of land on all three sides. You can live there in a decent way. Now, does not that please you?" asked Nekhliudof, perceiving that as soon as he spoke of settling somewhere else, Churis became perfectly motionless, and looked at the ground without even a shadow of a smile.

"It's as your excellency wills," he replied, not raising his eyes.

The old woman came forward as if something had stung her to the quick, and began to speak; but her husband anticipated her.

"It's as your excellency wills," he repeated resolutely, and at the same time humbly glancing at his master,

and tossing back his hair. "But it would never do for us to live on a new farm."

"Why not?"

"Nay, your excellency, not if you move us over there; here we are wretched enough, but over there we could never in the world get along. What kind of peasants should we be there? Nay, nay, it is impossible for us to live there. But it is as you will."

"But why not, pray?"

"We should be totally ruined, your excellency."

"But why can't you live there?"

"What kind of a life would it be? Just think! it has never been lived in; we don't know anything about the water, no pasture anywhere. Here we have had hempfields ever since we can remember, all manured; but what is there there? Yes, what is there there? A wilderness! No hedges, no corn-kilns, no sheds, no nothing at all! Oh, yes, your excellency; we should be ruined if you took us there; we should be perfectly ruined. A new place, all unknown to us," he repeated, shaking his head thoughtfully but resolutely.

Nekhliudof tried to point out to the peasant that the change, on the contrary, would be very advantageous for him; that they would plant hedges, and build sheds; that the water there was excellent, and so on: but Churis's obstinate silence exasperated him, and he accordingly felt that he was speaking to no purpose.

Churis made no objection to what he said; but, when the master finished speaking, he remarked, with a crafty smile, that it would be best of all to remove to that farm some of the old domestic servants, and Alyosha the fool, so that they might watch over the grain there.

"That would be worth while," he remarked, and smiled once more. "This is foolish business, your excellency."

"What makes you think the place is not inhabitable?" insisted Nekhliudof, patiently. "This place here is n't habitable, and has n't been, and yet you live here. But there, you will get settled there before you know it; you will certainly find it easy...."

"But, your excellency, kind sir,[1] how can it be compared?" replied Churis, eagerly, as if he feared that the master would not accept a conclusive argument. "Here is our place in the world; we are happy in it; we are accustomed to it, and the road and the pond.... where would the old woman do her washing? where would the cattle get watered? And all our peasant ways are here; here from time out of mind. And here's the threshing-floor, and the little garden, and the willows; and here my parents lived, and my grandfather; and my father gave his soul into God's keeping here, and I too would end my days here, your excellency. I ask nothing more than that. Be good, and let the hut be put in order; we shall be always grateful for your kindness: but no, not for anything, would we spend our last days anywhere else. Let us stay here and say our prayers," he continued, bowing low; "do not take us from our nest, batyushka!"

All the time that Churis was speaking, there was heard in the place under the loft, where his wife was standing, sobs growing more and more violent; and when the husband said "batyushka, — little father," she suddenly darted forward, and with tears in her eyes threw herself at the barin's feet.

"Don't destroy us, benefactor; you are our father, you are our mother! Where are you going to move us to? We are old folks; we have no one to help us. You are to us as God is," lamented the old woman.

Nekhliudof leaped up from the bench, and was going to lift the old woman; but she, with a sort of passionate despair, beat her forehead on the earth floor, and pushed aside the master's hand.

"What is the matter with you? Get up, I beg of you. If you don't wish to go, it is not necessary. I won't oblige you to," said he, waving his hand, and retreating to the door.

When Nekhliudof sat down on the bench again, and silence was restored in the room, interrupted only by the sobs of the old woman, who was once more busy

[1] *Batyushka vashe siyatelstvo.*

under the loft, and was wiping away her tears with the sleeves of her shirt, the young proprietor began to comprehend what was meant for the peasant and his wife by the dilapidated little hut, the crumbling well with the filthy pool, the decaying stalls and sheds, and the broken willows which could be seen before the crooked window; and the feeling that arose in him was burdensome, melancholy, and touched with shame.

"Why didn't you tell the Commune last Sunday, Ivan, that you needed a new hut? I don't know, now, how to help you. I told you all, at the first meeting, that I had come to live in the country, and devote my life to you, that I was ready to deprive myself of everything to make you happy and contented; and I vowed before God, now, that I would keep my word," said the young proprietor, not knowing that such a manner of opening the heart is incapable of arousing faith in any one, and especially in the Russian, who loves not words but deeds, and is reluctant to be stirred up by feelings, no matter how beautiful they may be.

But the simple-hearted young man was so pleased with this feeling that he experienced, that he could not help speaking.

Churis leaned his head to one side, and, slowly blinking, listened with constrained attention to his master, as to a man to whom he must needs listen, even though he says things not entirely good, and absolutely foreign to his way of thinking.

"But you see, I cannot do all that everybody asks of me. If I did not refuse some who asked me for wood, I myself should be left without any, and I could not give to those who really needed. When I made this rule, I did it for the regulation of the peasants' affairs; and I put it entirely in the hands of the Commune. This wood now is not mine, but yours, you peasants', and I cannot any longer dispose of it; but the Commune disposes of it, as you know. Come to the meeting to-night. I will tell the Commune about your request; if they are disposed to give you a new hut, well and good; but I have n't any more wood. I wish with

all my soul to help you; but if you aren't willing to move, then it is no longer my affair, but the Commune's. Do you understand me?"

"Many thanks for your kindness," replied Churis, in some agitation. "If you will give me some lumber, then we can make repairs. What is the Commune? It's a well-known fact that...."

"No, you come."

"I obey. I will come. Why shouldn't I come? Only this thing is sure: I won't ask the Commune."

CHAPTER IV

THE young proprietor evidently desired to ask some more questions of the peasants. He did not move from the bench; and he glanced irresolutely, now at Churis, now at the empty, unlighted stove.

"Well, have you had dinner yet?" he asked at last.

A mocking smile arose to Churis's lips, as if it were ridiculous to him for his master to ask such foolish questions; he made no reply.

"What do you mean, — dinner, benefactor?" said the old woman, sighing deeply. "We've eaten a little bread; that's our dinner. We couldn't get any vegetables to-day so as to boil some soup,[1] but we had a little kvas, — enough for the children."

"To-day was a fast-day for us, your excellency," remarked Churis, sarcastically, taking up his wife's words. "Bread and onions; that's the way we peasants live. Howsomever, praise be to the Lord, I have a little grain yet, thanks to your kindness; it's lasted till now; but there's plenty of our peasants as ain't got any. Everywheres there's scarcity of onions. Only a day or two ago they sent to Mikhaïl, the gardener, to get a bunch for a farthing: couldn't get any anywheres. Haven't been to God's church scarcely since Easter. Haven't had nothing to buy a taper for Mikola[2] with."

Nekhliudof, not by hearsay nor by trust in the words

[1] *Shchets* for *shchi*. [2] St. Nicholas.

of others, but by the evidence of his own eyes, had long known the extreme depth of poverty into which his peasantry had sunken; but the entire reality was in such perfect contrast to his own bringing up, the turn of his mind, and the course of his life, that in spite of himself he kept forgetting the truth of it; and every time when, as now, it was brought vividly, tangibly, before him, his heart was torn with painful, almost unendurable melancholy, as if some absolute and unavoidable punishment were torturing him.

"Why are you so poor?" he exclaimed, involuntarily expressing his thought.

"How could such as we help being poor, sir,[1] your excellency? Our land is so bad, you yourself may be pleased to know, — clay and sand-heaps; and surely we must have angered God, for this long time, ever since the cholera, the corn won't grow. Our meadows and everything else have been growing worse and worse. And some of us have to work for the farm, and some detailed for the manor-lands. And here I am with no one to help me, and I'm getting old. I'd be glad enough to work, but I have not any strength. And my old woman 's ailing; and every year there 's a new girl born, and I have to feed 'em all. I get tired out all alone, and here 's seven dependent on me. I must be a sinner in the eyes of the Lord God, I often think to myself. And, if God would take us off, I feel it would be easier for me; just as it 's better for them, than to lead such a dog's life here." ....

"Oh, okh!" groaned the old woman as a sort of confirmation of her husband's words.

"And this is all the help I have," continued Churis, pointing to the white-headed, unkempt little boy of seven, with a huge belly, who at this moment, timidly and quietly pushing the door open, came into the hut, and, resting his eyes in wonder and solemnity on the master, clung hold of Churis's shirt-band with both hands.

"This is all the assistance I have here," continued Churis, in a sonorous voice, laying his shaggy hand

[1] *Batyushka vashe siyatelstvo.*

on the little lad's white hair. "When will he be good for anything? But my work is n't much good. When I reach old age I shall be good for nothing; the rupture is getting the better of me. In wet weather it makes me fairly scream. I am getting to be an old man, and yet I have to take care of my land.[1] And here 's Yermilof, Demkin, Ziabref, all younger than I am, and they have been freed from their land long ago. Well, I have n't any one to help me with it; that 's my misfortune. There are so many to feed; that 's where my struggle lies, your excellency."

"I should be very glad to make it easier for you, truly. But how can I?" asked the young barin, in a tone of sympathy, looking at the serf.

"How make it easier? It 's a well-known fact, if you have the land you must do enforced labor[2] also; that 's the regulation. I expect something from this youngster. If only you 'd be good enough to let him off from going to school. But just a day or two ago, the officer[3] came and said that your excellency wanted him to go to school. Do let him off; he has no capacity for learning, your excellency. He 's too young yet; he won't understand anything."

"No, brother, you 're wrong there," said the barin. "Your boy is old enough to understand; it 's time for him to be learning. I am telling you what is for your interest. Just think of it! How he 'll grow up, and learn about farming; yes, and he 'll know his a-b-c's, and know how to read; and read in church. He 'll be a great help to you if God lets him live," said Nekhliudof, trying to make himself as plain as possible, and at the same time blushing and stammering.

1 The lands belonging to the Russian commune, or *mir*, were periodically distributed by allotment, each full-grown peasant receiving as his share a *tiaglo*, representing what the average man and his wife were capable of cultivating. When the period was long — ten years, for instance — it sometimes happened that a serf, by reason of illness, laziness, or other misfortune, would find it hard to cultivate his share, pay the tax on it, and also do the work required of him on his barin's land. Such was Churis's complaint. — ED.

2 *Barshchina:* work on the master's land. 3 *Zemski.*

"Very true, your excellency. You don't want to do us an injury, but there's no one to take care of the house; for while I and the old woman are doing the enforced labor, the boy, though he's so young, is a great help, driving the cattle and watering the horses. Whatever he is, he's a true muzhik;" and Churisenok, with a smile, took the lad's nose between his fat fingers, and squeezed it dry.

"Nevertheless, you must send him to school, for now you are at home, and he has plenty of time, — do you hear? Don't you fail."

Churisenok sighed deeply, and made no reply.

CHAPTER V

"THERE's one other thing I wished to speak to you about," said Nekhliudof. "Why don't you haul out your manure?"

"What manure, sir, your excellency? There is n't any to haul out. What cattle have I got? One mare and colt; and last autumn I sold my heifer to the porter, — that's all the cattle I've got."

"I know you have n't much, but why did you sell your heifer?" asked the barin, in amazement.

"What have I got to feed her on?"

"Did n't you have some straw for feeding the cow? The others did."

"The others have their fields manured, but my land's all clay. I can't do anything with it."

"Why don't you dress it, then, so it won't be clay? Then the land would give you grain, and you'd have something to feed to your stock."

"But I have n't any stock, so how am I going to get dressing?"

"That's an odd *cercle vicieux*," said Nekhliudof to himself; and he actually was at his wits' ends to find an answer for the peasant.

"And I tell you this, your excellency, it's not the manure that makes the corn grow, but God," continued

Churis. "Now, one summer I had six ricks on one little undressed piece[1] of land, and only a tithe as much on that which was manured well. No one like God," he added, with a sigh. "Yes, and my stock are always dying off. Five years past I have n't had any luck with 'em. Last summer one heifer died; had to sell another, had n't anything to feed her on; and last year my best cow perished. They were driving her home from pasture; nothing the matter, but suddenly she staggered and staggered. And so now it 's all empty here. Just my bad luck!"

"Well, brother, since you say that you have no cattle to help you make fodder, and no fodder for your cattle, here 's something for a cow," said Nekhliudof, reddening, and fetching forth from his pocket a packet of crumpled bank-notes and untying it. "Buy you a cow at my expense, and get some fodder from the granary; I will give orders. See to it that you have a cow by next Sunday. I shall come to see."

Churis hesitated long; and when he made no motion to take the money, Nekhliudof laid it down on the end of the table, and a still deeper flush spread over his face.

"Many thanks for your kindness," said Churis, with his ordinary smile, which was somewhat sarcastic.

The old woman sighed heavily several times as she stood under the loft, and seemed to be repeating a prayer.

The situation was embarrassing for the young prince; he hastily got up from the bench, went out into the entry, and called to Churis to follow him. The sight of the man whom he had been befriending was so pleasant that he found it hard to tear himself away.

"I am glad to help you," said he, halting by the well. "It 's in my power to help you, because I know that you are not lazy. You will work, and I will assist you; and, with God's aid, you will come out all right."

[1] Churis calls this little piece of land *ocminnik*. In the government of Tula, where Count Tolstoï lives, the *ocminnik* (from *vosem*, eight) is a measure equaling one-eighth of a *desyatin*, or 2.7 acres.

"There 's no hope of coming out all right, your excellency," said Churis, suddenly assuming a serious and even stern expression of countenance, as if the young man's assurance that he would come out all right had awakened all his opposition. "In my father's time my brothers and I did not see any lack; but when he died, we broke all up. It kept going from bad to worse. It all comes from living alone."

"Why did you break up?"

"All on account of the women, your excellency. It was just after your grandfather died; when he was alive, we should not have ventured to do it; then the present order of things came in. He was just like you, he took an interest in everything; and we should not have dared to separate. The late master did not like to look after the peasants; but after your grandfather's time, Andreï Ilyitch took charge. God forgive him! he was a drunken, careless man. We came to him once and again with complaints, — no living on account of the women, — begged him to let us separate. Well, he put it off, and put it off; but at last things came to such a pass, the women kept each to their own part; we began to live apart; and of course, what could a single peasant do? Well, there was no law or order. Andreï Ilyitch managed simply to suit himself. 'Take all you can get.' And whatever he could extort from a peasant, he took without asking. Then the poll-tax was raised, and they began to exact more provisions, and we had less and less land, and the grain stopped growing. Well, when the new allotment was made, then he took away from us our manured land, and added it to the master's, the villain, and ruined us entirely. He ought have been hung. Your father — the kingdom of heaven be his! — was a good barin, but it was rarely enough that we ever had sight of him; he always lived in Moscow. Well, of course they used to drive the carts in pretty often. Sometimes it would be the season of bad roads,[1] and no fodder; but no matter! The barin could n't get along without it. We did not dare to complain at this, but

[1] *Rasputitsa*, the breaking up of the winter.

there was n't system. But now your grace[1] lets any of us peasants see your face, and so a change has come over us; and the overseer is a different kind of man. Now we know for sure that we have a barin. And it is impossible to say how grateful your peasants are for your kindness. But before you came, there was n't any real barin; every one was barin. Ilyitch was barin, and his wife put on the airs of a lady,[2] and the scribe from the police-station was barin. Too many of 'em! ukh! the peasants had to put up with many trials."

Again Nekhliudof experienced a feeling akin to shame or remorse. He put on his hat, and went on his way.

CHAPTER VI

"YUKHVANKA the clever[3] wants to sell a horse," was what Nekhliudof next read in his note-book; and he proceeded along the street to Yukhvanka's place.[4] Yukhvanka's izba was carefully thatched with straw from the threshing-floor of the estate; the framework was of new light gray aspen wood (also from stock belonging to the estate), had two handsome painted shutters for the window, and a porch with eaves and ingenious balustrades cut out of deal planks.

The narrow entry and the summer-room were also in perfect order; but the general impression of sufficiency and comfort given by this establishment was somewhat injured by a barn inclosed in the gates, which had a dilapidated hedge and a sagging pent-roof appearing from behind it.

Just as Nekhliudof approached the steps from one side, two peasant women came up on the other, carrying a tub full of water. One was Yukhvanka's wife, the other his mother.

The first was a robust, healthy-looking woman, with an extraordinarily exuberant bosom, and wide, fat cheeks. She wore a clean shirt embroidered on the

[1] *Vasha milost*, your mercy.
[2] *Baruinya*.
[3] *Yukhvanka-Mudr'yonui*.
[4] *Dvor*.

sleeves and collar, an apron of the same material, a new linen skirt, peasants' shoes, a string of beads, and an elegant four-cornered head-dress of embroidered red paper and spangles.

The end of the water-yoke was not in the least unsteady, but was firmly settled on her wide and solid shoulder. Her easy forcefulness, manifested in her rosy face, in the curvature of her back, and the measured swing of her arms and legs, made it evident that she had splendid health and a man's strength.

Yukhvanka's mother, bearing the other end of the yoke, was, on the contrary, one of those elderly women who seem to have reached the final limit of old age and decrepitude. Her bony frame, clad in a black, dilapidated shirt and a faded linen skirt, was bent so that the water-yoke rested rather on her back than on her shoulder. Her two hands, whose distorted fingers seemed to clutch the yoke, were of a strange dark chestnut color, and were convulsively cramped. Her drooping head, wrapped up in some sort of clout, bore the most repulsive evidences of indigence and extreme old age.

From under her narrow brow, perfectly covered with deep wrinkles, two red eyes, unprotected by lashes, gazed with leaden expression to the ground. One yellow tooth protruded from her sunken upper lip, and, constantly moving, sometimes came in contact with her sharp chin. The wrinkles on the lower part of her face and neck hung down like little bags, quivering at every motion.

She breathed heavily and hoarsely; but her bare, distorted legs, though it seemed as if they would have barely strength to drag along over the ground, moved with measured steps.

CHAPTER VII

Almost stumbling against the prince, the young wife precipitately set down the tub, showed a little embarrassment, dropped a courtesy, and then with shining eyes

glanced up at him, and, endeavoring to hide a slight smile behind the sleeve of her embroidered shirt, ran up the steps, clattering in her wooden shoes.

"Mother,[1] you take the water-yoke to Aunt Nastasia," said she, pausing at the door, and addressing the old woman.

The modest young proprietor looked sternly but scrutinizingly at the rosy woman, frowned, and turned to the old dame, who, seizing the yoke with her crooked fingers, submissively lifted it to her shoulder, and was about to direct her steps to the adjacent izba.

"Is your son at home?" asked the prince.

The old woman, her bent form bent more than usual, made an obeisance, and tried to say something in reply, but, suddenly putting her hand to her mouth, was taken with such a fit of coughing, that Nekhliudof without waiting went into the hut.

Yukhvanka, who had been sitting on the bench in the "red corner,"[2] when he saw his barin, threw himself on the oven, apparently anxious to hide from him, hastily thrust something away in the loft, and, with mouth and eyes twitching, squeezed himself close to the wall, as if to make way for the prince.

Yukhvanka was a light-complexioned fellow, thirty years of age, spare, with a young, pointed beard. He was well proportioned, and rather handsome, save for the unpleasant expression of his hazel eyes, under his knitted brow, and for the lack of two front teeth, which immediately attracted one's attention because his lips were short and constantly parted.

He wore a Sunday shirt with bright red gussets, striped print drawers, and heavy boots with wrinkled legs.

The interior of Vanka's hut was not so narrow and gloomy as that of Churis's, though it was fully as stifling, as redolent of smoke and sheepskin, and showed as disorderly an array of peasant garments and utensils.

Two things here strangely attracted the attention, —

[1] *Matushka.*

[2] Where the holy images and lighted taper are to be found.

a small damaged samovar standing on the shelf, and a black frame near the ikon, with the remains of a dirty mirror and the portrait of some general in a red uniform.

Nekhliudof looked with distaste on the samovar, the general's portrait, and the loft, where stuck out, from under some rags, the end of a copper-mounted pipe. Then he turned to the peasant.

"How do you do, Yepifan?" said he, looking into his eyes.

Yepifan bowed low, and mumbled, "Good-morning, 'slency,"[1] with a peculiar abbreviation of the last word, while his eyes wandered restlessly from the prince to the ceiling, and from the ceiling to the floor, and not pausing on anything. Then he hastily ran to the loft, dragged out a coat, and began to put it on.

"Why are you putting on your coat?" asked Nekhliudof, sitting down on the bench, and evidently endeavoring to look at Yepifan as sternly as possible.

"How can I appear before you without it, 'slency? You see we can understand...."

"I have come to find out why you need to sell a horse? Have you many horses? What horse do you wish to sell?" said the prince, without wasting words, but propounding questions that he had evidently preconsidered.

"We are greatly beholden to you, 'slency, that you do not think it beneath you to visit me, your muzhik," replied Yukhvanka, casting hasty glances at the general's portrait, at the stove, at the prince's boots, and everything else except Nekhliudof's face. "We always pray God for your 'slency."

"Why sell the horse?" repeated Nekhliudof, raising his voice, and coughing.

Yukhvanka sighed, tossed back his hair, — again his glance roved about the hut, — and noticing the cat, which lay on the bench contentedly purring, he shouted out to her, "Scat, you rubbish!"[2] and quickly addressed

[1] *Vasiaso* for *vashe siatelstvo* (your excellency).
[2] *Bruis', podlaya!*

himself to the barin. "A horse, 'slency, which ain't worth anything. If the beast was good for anything, I should n't think of selling him, 'slency."

"How many horses have you in all?"

"Three horses, 'slency."

"No colts?"

"Of course, 'slency. There is one colt."

CHAPTER VIII

"COME, show me your horses. Are they in the yard?" [1]

"Indeed they are, 'slency. I have done as I was told, 'slency. Could we fail to heed you, 'slency? Yakof Ilyitch told me not to send the horses out to pasture. 'The prince,' says he, 'is coming to look at them,' and so we did n't send them. For, of course, we should n't dare to disobey you, 'slency."

While Nekhliudof was on his way to the door, Yukhvanka snatched down his pipe from the loft, and flung it into the stove. His lips were still drawn in with the same expression of constraint even when the prince was not looking at him.

A wretched little gray mare, with thin tail, all stuck up with burrs, was sniffing at the filthy straw under the pent-roof. A long-legged colt two months old, of some nondescript color, with bluish hoofs and nose, followed close behind her.

In the middle of the yard stood a pot-bellied brown gelding with closed eyes and thoughtfully pendent head. It was apparently an excellent little horse for a peasant.

"So these are all your horses?"

"No, indeed, 'slency. Here 's still another mare, and here 's the little colt," replied Yukhvanka, pointing to the horses, which the prince could not help seeing.

"I see. Which one do you propose to sell?"

"This here one, 'slency," he replied, waving his jacket

[1] *Dvor.*

in the direction of the somnolent gelding, and constantly winking and sucking in his lips.

The gelding opened his eyes, and lazily switched his tail.

"He does not seem to be old, and he's fairly plump," said Nekhliudof. "Bring him up, and show me his teeth. I can tell if he's old."

"You can't tell by one indication, 'slency. The beast is n't worth a farthing. He's peculiar. You have to judge both by tooth and limb, 'slency," replied Yukhvanka, smiling very gayly, and letting his eyes rove in all directions.

"What nonsense! Bring him here, I tell you."

Yukhvanka stood, still smiling, and made a deprecatory gesture; and it was only when Nekhliudof cried angrily, "Well, what are you up to?" that he moved toward the shed, seized the halter, and began to pull at the horse, scaring him, and getting farther and farther away as the horse resisted.

The young prince was evidently vexed to see this, and perhaps, also, he wished to show his own shrewdness.

"Give me the halter," he cried.

"Excuse me. It's impossible for you, 'slency, — don't...."

But Nekhliudof went straight up to the horse's head, and, suddenly seizing him by the ears, bent it down to the ground with such force, that the gelding, who, as it seems, was a very peaceful peasant steed, began to kick and strangle in his endeavors to get away.

When Nekhliudof perceived that it was perfectly useless to exert his strength so, and looked at Yukhvanka, who was still smiling, the thought most maddening at his time of life occurred to him, — that Yukhvanka was laughing at him, and regarding him as a mere child.

He reddened, let go of the horse's ears, and, without making use of the halter, opened the creature's mouth, and looked at his teeth: they were sound, the crowns full, so far as the young man had time to make his observations. No doubt the horse was in his prime.

Meantime Yukhvanka came to the shed, and, seeing that the harrow was lying out of its place, seized it, and stood it up against the wattled hedge.

"Come here," shouted the prince, with an expression of childish annoyance in his face, and almost with tears of vexation and wrath in his voice. "What! call this horse old?"

"Excuse me, 'slency, very old, twenty years old at least. A horse that ...."

"Silence! You are a liar and a good-for-nothing. No decent peasant will lie, there's no need for him to," said Nekhliudof, choking with the angry tears that filled his throat.

He stopped speaking, lest he should be detected in weeping before the peasant. Yukhvanka also said nothing, and had the appearance of a man who was almost on the verge of tears, blew his nose, and slowly shook his head.

"Well, how are you going to plow when you have disposed of this horse?" continued Nekhliudof, calming himself with an effort, so as to speak in his ordinary voice. "You are sent out into the field on purpose to drive the horses for plowing, and you wish to dispose of your last horse? And I should like to know why you need to lie about it."

In proportion as the prince calmed down, Yukhvanka also calmed down. He straightened himself up, and, while he sucked in his lips constantly, he let his eyes rove about from one object to another.

"Lie to you, 'slency? We are no worse off than others in going to work."

"But what will you go on?"

"Don't worry. We will do your work, 'slency," he replied, starting up the gelding, and driving him away. "Even if we did n't need money, I should want to get rid of him."

"Why do you need money?"

"Have no grain, 'slency; and besides, we peasants have to pay our debts, 'slency."

"How is it you have no grain? Others, who have

families, have corn enough; but you have no family, and you are in want. Where is it all gone?"

"Ate it up, 'slency, and now we have n't a bit. I will buy a horse in the autumn, 'slency."

"Don't for a moment dare to think of selling your horse."

"But if we don't then what 'll become of us, 'slency? No grain, and forbidden to sell anything," he replied, turning his head to one side, sucking in his lips, and suddenly glancing boldly into the prince's face. "Of course we shall die of starvation."

"Look here, brother," cried Nekhliudof, paling, and experiencing a feeling of righteous indignation against the peasant. "I can't endure such peasants as you are. It will go hard with you."

"Just as you will, 'slency," he replied, shutting his eyes with an expression of feigned submission; "I should not think of disobeying you. But it comes not from any fault of mine. Of course, I may not please you, 'slency; at all events, I can do as you wish; only I don't see why I deserve to be punished."

"This is why: because your yard is exposed, your manure is not plowed in, your hedges are broken down, and yet you sit at home smoking your pipe, and don't work; because you don't give a crust of bread to your mother, who gave you your whole place,[1] and you let your wife beat her, and she has to come to me with her complaints."

"Excuse me, 'slency, I don't know what you mean by smoking your pipe," replied Yukhvanka, in a constrained tone, showing beyond peradventure that the complaint about his smoking touched him to the quick. "It is possible to say anything about a man."

"Now you 're lying again! I myself saw...."

"How could I venture to lie to you, 'slency?"

Nekhliudof made no answer, but bit his lip, and began to walk back and forth in the yard. Yukhvanka, standing in one place and not lifting his eyes, followed the prince's legs.

[1] *Khozyaïstvo.*

"See here, Yepifan," said Nekhliudof, in a childishly gentle voice, coming to a pause before the peasant, and endeavoring to hide his vexation, "it is impossible to live so, and you are working your own destruction. Just think. If you want to be a good peasant, then turn over a new leaf, cease your evil courses, stop lying, don't get drunk any more, honor your mother. You see, I know all about you. Take hold of your work; don't steal from the crown woods, for the sake of going to the tavern. Think how well off you might be. If you really need anything, then come to me; tell me honestly what you need and why you need it; and don't tell lies, but tell the whole truth, and then I won't refuse you anything that I can possibly grant."

"Excuse me, 'slency; I think I understand you, 'slency," said Yukhvanka, smiling as if he comprehended the entire significance of the prince's words.

That smile and answer completely disenchanted Nekhliudof as far as he had any hope of reforming the man, and of turning him into the path of virtue by means of moral suasion. It seemed to him hard that it should be wasted energy when he had the power to warn the peasant, and that all he had said was exactly what he should not have said.

He shook his head gravely, and went to the entry. The old woman was sitting on the threshold and groaning heavily, as it seemed to the young proprietor as a sign of approbation of his words, which she had overheard.

"Here's something for you to get bread with," said Nekhliudof in her ear, pressing a bank-note into her hand. "But keep it for yourself, and don't give it to Yepifan, else he 'll drink it up."

The old woman with her distorted hand laid hold of the door-post, and tried to get up. She began to pour out her thanks to the prince; her head began to wag, but Nekhliudof was already on the other side of the street when she got to her feet.

CHAPTER IX

"DAVUIDKA BYELUI[1] asks for grain and posts," was what followed Yukhvanka's case in the note-book.

After passing by a number of yards, Nekhliudof came to a turn in the lane, and there fell in with his overseer Yakof Alpatuitch, who, while the prince was still at a distance, took off his oiled cap, and, pulling out a crumpled, foulard handkerchief began to wipe his fat red face.

"Cover yourself, Yakof! Yakof, cover yourself, I tell you."....

"Where have you been, if I may ask your excellency?" asked Yakof, using his cap to shield his eyes from the sun, but not putting it on.

"I have been at Yukhvanka's. Now please tell me, why does he act so?" asked the prince, as he walked along the street.

"Why, indeed, your excellency!" echoed the overseer, as he followed behind the prince in a respectful attitude. He put on his cap, and began to twist his mustache.

"What's to be done with him? He's thoroughly good for nothing, lazy, thievish, a liar; he persecutes his mother, and to all appearances he is such a confirmed good-for-nothing that there is no reforming him."

"I didn't know, your excellency, that he displeased you so."....

"And his wife," continued the prince, interrupting the overseer, "seems like a bad woman. The old mother is dressed worse than a beggar, and has nothing to eat; but she wears all her best clothes, and so does he. I really don't know what is to be done with them."

Yakof knit his brows thoughtfully when Nekhliudof spoke of Yukhvanka's wife.

"Well, if he behaves so, your excellency," began the overseer, "then it will be necessary to find some way to correct things. He is in abject poverty like all the peasants who have no assistance, but he seems to manage his affairs quite differently from the others. He's a

[1] Little David White.

clever fellow, knows how to read, and he 's far from being a dishonest peasant. At the collection of the poll-taxes he was always on hand. And for three years, while I was overseer he was bailiff, and no fault was found with him. In the third year the warden took it into his head to depose him, so he was obliged to take to farming. I believe when he lived in town at the station he got drunk sometimes, so they had to devise some means. They used to threaten him, in fun, and he came to his senses again. He was good-natured, and got along well with his family. But as it does not please you to use these means, I am sure I don't know what we are to do with him. He has really got very low. He can't be sent into the army, because, as you may be pleased to remember, two of his teeth are missing. Yes, and there are others besides him, I venture to remind you, who absolutely have no fear...."

"Enough of that, Yakof," interrupted Nekhliudof, smiling shrewdly. "You and I have discussed that again and again. You know what ideas I have on this subject; and, whatever you may say to me, I still remain of the same opinion."

"Certainly, your excellency, you understand it all," said Yakof, shrugging his shoulders, and looking askance at the prince as if what he saw were worthy of no consideration. "But as far as the old woman is concerned, I beg you to see that you are disturbing yourself to no purpose," he continued. "Certainly it is true that she has brought up the orphans, she has fed Yukhvanka, and got him a wife, and so forth; but you know that it is common enough among peasants, when the mother or father has transferred the property[1] to the son, then the son and daughter-in-law get control, and the old mother is obliged to work for her own living to the utmost of her strength. Of course they are lacking in delicate feelings, but this is common enough among the peasantry; and so I take the liberty of explaining to you that you are stirred up about the old woman all for nothing. She is a clever old woman, and a good house-

[1] *Khozyaïstvo.*

wife;[1] is there any reason for a gentleman to worry over her? Well, she quarreled with her daughter-in-law; maybe the young woman struck her; that's like a woman, and they would make up again while you torment yourself. You really take it all too much to heart," said the overseer, looking with a certain expression of fondness mingled with condescension at his barin, who was walking silently with long strides before him up the street.

"Will you go home now?" he added.

"No, to Davuidka Byelui's or Kazyol's — what is his name?"

"Well, he's a good-for-nothing, I assure you. All the race of the Kazyols are of the same sort. I haven't had any success with him; he cares for nothing. Yesterday I rode past the peasant's field, and his buckwheat was n't even sowed yet. What do you wish done with such people? The old man taught his son, but still he's a good-for-nothing just the same; whether for himself or for the estate, he makes a bungle of everything. Neither the warden nor I have been able to do anything with him; we've sent him to the station-house, and we've punished him at home, because you are pleased now to like...."

"Who? the old man?"

"Yes, the old man. The warden more than once has punished him before the whole assembly, and, would you believe it? he would shake himself, go home, and be as bad as ever. And Davuidka, I assure your excellency, is a law-abiding peasant, and a quick-witted peasant; that is he does n't smoke and does n't drink," explained Yakof; "and yet he's worse than the other, who gets drunk. There's nothing else to do with him than to make a soldier of him or send him to Siberia. All the Kazyols are the same; and Matriushka, who lives in the village, belongs to their family, and is the same sort of cursed good-for-nothing. Don't you care to have me here, your excellency?" inquired the overseer, perceiving that the prince did not heed what he was saying.

[1] *Khozyaïka.*

"No, go away," replied Nekhliudof, absent-mindedly, and turned his steps toward Davuidka Byelui's.

Davuidka's hovel[1] stood askew and alone at the very edge of the village. It had neither yard, nor corn-kiln, nor barn. Only some sort of dirty stalls for cattle were built against one side. On the other, a heap of brush-wood and logs was piled up, in imitation of a yard.[2]

Tall, green steppe-grass was growing in the place where the courtyard should have been.

There was no living creature to be seen near the hovel, except a sow lying in the mire at the threshold, and grunting.

Nekhliudof tapped at the broken window; but, as no one made answer, he went into the entry and shouted, "Halloa there!"[3]

This also brought no response. He passed through the entry, peered into the empty stalls, and entered the open hut.

An old red cock and two hens with ruffs were scratching with their claws, and strutting about over the floor and benches. When they saw a man, they spread their wings, and, cackling with terror, flew against the walls, and one took refuge on the oven.

The whole hut, which was not quite fourteen feet[4] square, was occupied by the oven with its broken pipe, a loom, which, in spite of its being summer-time, was not taken down, and a most filthy table made of split and uneven plank.

Although it was a dry situation, there was a filthy puddle at the door, caused by the recent rain, which had leaked through roof and ceiling. Loft there was none. It was hard to realize that this was a human habitation, such decided evidence of neglect and disorder was impressed on both the exterior and the interior of the hovel; nevertheless, in this hovel lived Davuidka Byelui and all his family.

At the present moment, notwithstanding the heat of

[1] *Izba.* [2] *Dvor.*
[3] *Khozyaeva*, literally, master and mistress.
[4] Six *arshin.*

the June day, Davuidka, with his head covered by his sheepskin,[1] was fast asleep, curled up on one corner of the oven. The panic-stricken hen, skipping up on the oven, and growing more and more agitated, took up her position on Davuidka's back, but did not awaken him.

Nekhliudof, seeing no one in the hovel, was about to go, when a prolonged humid sigh betrayed the sleeper.[2]

"Ei! who's there?" cried the prince.

A second prolonged sigh was heard from the oven.

"Who's there? Come here!"

Still another sigh, a sort of a bellow, and a heavy yawn responded to the prince's call.

"Well, what do you want?"

Something moved slowly on the oven. The skirt of a torn sheepskin[3] was lifted; one huge leg in a dilapidated boot was put down, then another, and finally Davuidka's entire figure emerged. He sat up on the oven, and rubbed his eyes drowsily and morosely with his fist.

Slowly shaking his head, and yawning, he looked into the hut, and, seeing the prince, began to make greater haste than before; but still his motions were so slow that Nekhliudof had time to walk back and forth three times from the puddle to the loom before Davuidka got down from the oven.

Davuidka, called *Byelui*, — White, — was white in reality; his hair and his body and his face were all perfectly white.

He was tall, and very stout, but stout as peasants are wont to be, that is, not in the waist alone, but in the whole body. His stoutness, however, was of a peculiar flabby, unhealthy kind. His rather comely face, with pale blue, good-natured eyes and a wide-trimmed beard, bore the impress of ill-health. There was not the slightest trace of tan or blood; it was of a uniform yellowish ashen tint, with pale livid circles under the eyes, quite as if his face were stuffed with fat or bloated.

His hands were puffy and yellow, like the hands of men afflicted with dropsy, and they were covered with

[1] *Polushubok.* [2] *Khozyaïn.* [3] *Tulup.*

a growth of fine white hair. He was so drowsy that he could scarcely open his eyes or cease from staggering and yawning.

"Well, are n't you ashamed of yourself," began Nekhliudof, "sleeping in the very best part of the day,[1] when you ought to be attending to your work, when you have n't any corn?"

As Davuidka little by little shook off his drowsiness, and began to realize that it was his barin who was standing before him, he folded his arms across his stomach, hung his head, inclining it a trifle to one side, and did not move a limb or say a word; but the expression of his face and the pose of his whole body seemed to say, "I know, I know; it is an old story with me. Well, strike me, if it must be; I will endure it."

He evidently was anxious for the prince to get through speaking and give him his thrashing as quickly as possible, even if he struck him severely on his swollen cheeks, and then leave him in peace.

Perceiving that Davuidka did not understand him, Nekhliudof endeavored by various questions to rouse the peasant from his vexatiously obstinate silence.

"Why have you asked me for wood when you have enough to last you a whole month here, and you have n't had any anything to do? What?"

Davuidka still remained silent, and did not move.

"Well, answer me."

Davuidka muttered something, and blinked his white eyelashes.

"You must go to work, brother. What will become of you if you don't work? Now you have no grain, and what 's the reason of it? Because your land is badly plowed, and not harrowed, and no seed put in at the right time, — all from laziness. You asked me for grain; well, let us suppose that I gave it to you, so as to keep you from starving to death, still it is not becoming to do so. Whose grain do I give you? whose do you think? Answer me, — whose grain do I give you?" insisted Nekhliudof.

[1] Literally, middle of the white day.

"The master's,"[1] muttered Davuidka, raising his eyes timidly and questioningly.

"But where did the master's grain come from? Think for yourself, who plowed for it? who harrowed? who planted it? who harvested it? The peasants, hey? Just look here: if the master's grain is given to the peasants, then those peasants who work most will get most; but you work less than anybody. You are complained about on all sides. You work less than all the others, and yet you ask for more of the master's grain than all the rest. Why should it be given to you, and not to the others? Now, if all, like you, lay on their backs, it would not be long before everybody in the world died of starvation. Brother, you 've got to work. This is disgraceful. Do you hear, Davuid?"

"I hear you," said the other, slowly, through his teeth.

CHAPTER X

At this moment, the window was darkened by the head of a peasant woman who passed, carrying some linen on a yoke, and presently Davuidka's mother came into the izba. She was a tall woman, fifty years old, very fresh and lively. Her ugly face was covered with pock-marks and wrinkles; but her straight, firm nose, her delicate, compressed lips, and her keen gray eyes gave witness to her mental strength and energy.

The angularity of her shoulders, the flatness of her chest, the thinness of her hands, and the solid muscles of her black bare legs, made it evident that she had long ago ceased to be a woman, and had become a mere drudge.

She came hurrying into the hovel, shut the door, set down her linen, and looked angrily at her son.

Nekhliudof was about to say something to her, but she turned her back on him, and began to cross herself before the black wooden ikon, which was visible behind the loom.

[1] *Gospodski-to*: belonging to the lord of the estate.

When she had thus done, she adjusted the dirty checkered handkerchief which was tied around her head, and made a low obeisance to the prince.

"A pleasant Lord's day to you, excellency,"[1] she said. "God spare you; you are our father."

When Davuidka saw his mother, he grew confused, bent his back a little, and hung his head still lower.

"Thanks, Arina," replied Nekhliudof. "I have just been talking with your son about your affairs."[2]

Arina, or Arishka-Burlak,[3] as the peasants called her even when she was a girl, rested her chin on the clenched fist of her right hand, which she supported with the palm of the left, and, without waiting for what her barin might say, began to talk so sharply and loud that the whole hovel was filled with the sound of her voice; and from outside it might have been concluded that several women had suddenly begun to talk together.

"What, my father, what is then to be said to him? You can't talk to him as to a man. Here he stands, the lout," she continued, contemptuously wagging her head in the direction of Davuidka's woe-begone, stolid form.

"How are *my* affairs, sir, your excellency? We are poor. In your whole village there are none so bad off as we are, either for our own work or for yours. It's a shame! And it's all his fault. I bore him, fed him, gave him to drink. Did n't expect to have such a lubber. This is what we've come to: the grain is all gone, and no more work is to be got out of him than from that piece of rotten wood. All he can do is to lie on top of the oven, or else he stands here, and scratches his empty pate," she said, mimicking him.

"If you could only frighten him, father! I myself beseech you; punish him, for the Lord God's sake! send him off as a soldier .... it's all one. But he's no good to me .... that's the way it is."

"Now, aren't you ashamed, Davuidka, to bring your

[1] *S praznikom Khristovuim, vashe siyatelstvo;* literally, with Christ's holiday. [2] *Khozyaïstvo.*

[3] Clodhopper; *burlak* is the term by which the boatmen on the Volga are known.

mother to this?" said Nekhliudof, reproachfully, addressing the muzhik.

Davuidka did not move.

"One might think that he was a sick peasant," continued Arina, with the same eagerness and the same gestures; "but only to look at him you can see he's fatter than the pig at the mill. It would seem as if he might have strength enough to work on something, the lubber! But no, not he! He prefers to curl himself up on top of the oven. And even when he undertakes to do anything, it would make you sick even to look at him, the way he goes about the work! He wastes time when he gets up, when he moves, when he does anything," said she, dwelling on the words, and awkwardly swaying from side to side with her angular shoulders.

"Now, here to-day my old man himself went to the forest after wood, and told him to dig a hole; but he did not even put his hand to the shovel." ....

She paused for a moment.

"He has killed me," she suddenly hissed, gesticulating with her arms, and advancing toward her son with threatening gestures. "Curse your smooth, bad face!"

She scornfully, and at the same time despairingly, turned from him, spat, and again addressed the prince with the same animation, still swinging her arms, but with tears in her eyes.

"I am the only one, benefactor. My old man is sick, old; yes, and I get no help out of him; and I am the only one at all. And this fellow hangs around my neck like a stone. If he would only die, then it would be easier; that would be the end of it. He lets me starve, the coward. You are our father. There's no help for me. My daughter-in-law died of work, and I shall too."

CHAPTER XI

"How did she die?" inquired Nekhliudof, somewhat skeptically.

"She died of hard work, as God knows, benefactor.

We brought her last year from Baburino," she continued, suddenly changing her wrathful expression to one of tearfulness and grief. "Well, the woman was young, fresh, obliging, good stuff. As a girl, she lived at home with her father in clover, never knew want; and when she came to us, then she learned to do our work.... for the estate and at home and everywhere..... She and I .... that was all to do it. What was it to me? I was used to it. She was going to have a baby, good father; and she began to suffer pain; and all because she worked beyond her strength. Well, she did herself harm, the poor little sweetheart. Last summer, about the time of the feast of Peter and Paul, she had a poor little boy born. But there was no bread. We ate whatever we could get, my father. She went to work too soon; her milk all dried up. The baby was her first-born. There was no cow, and we were mere peasants. She had to feed him on rye. Well, of course, it was sheer folly. It kept pining away on this. And when the child died, she became so down-spirited, — she would sob and sob, and howl and howl; and then it was poverty and work, and all the time going from bad to worse. So she passed away in the summer, the sweetheart, at the time of the feast of St. Mary's Intercession. He brought her to it, the beast," she cried, turning to her son with wrathful despair. .... "I wanted to ask your excellency a favor," she continued, after a short pause, lowering her voice and making an obeisance.

"What?" asked Nekhliudof, absent-mindedly, but still moved by her story.

"You see he 's a young peasant still. He demands so much work of me. To-day I am alive, to-morrow I may die. How can he live without a wife? He won't be any good to you at all. Help us to find some one for him, good father."

"That is, you want to get a wife for him? Is that it? What an idea!"

"God's will be done! You are in the place of parents to us."[1]

[1] *Vui nashi otsui-materi:* you are our fathers-mothers.

And, after making a sign to her son, she and the man threw themselves on the floor at the prince's feet.

"Why do you stoop to the ground?" asked Nekhliudof, peevishly, taking her by the shoulder. "Don't you know it is impossible to speak so? You know I don't like this sort of thing. Marry your son, of course, if you have a girl in view. I should be very glad if you had a daughter-in-law to help you."

The old woman got up, and began to rub her dry eyes with her sleeves. Davuidka followed her example, and, rubbing his eyes with his weak fist, with the same patiently submissive expression, continued to stand, and listen to what Arina said.

"Plenty of brides, certainly. Here's Vasiutka Mikherkin's daughter, and a right good girl she is; but the girl would not come to us without your consent."

"Is n't she willing?"

"No, benefactor, she is n't."

"Well, what is to be done? I can't compel her. Select some one else. If you can't find one at home, go to another village. I will pay for her, only she must come of her own free will. It is impossible to marry her by force. There 's no law allows that; that would be a great sin."

"E-e-kh! benefactor! Is it possible that any one would come to us of her own accord, seeing our way of life, our wretchedness? Not even the wife of a soldier would like to undergo such want. What muzhik would let us have his girl? It is not to be expected. You see we 're in the very depths of poverty. They will say, 'Since you starved one to death, it will be the same with mine.' Who is to give her?" she added, shaking her head dubiously. "Give us your advice, excellency."

"Well, what can I do?"

"Think of some one for us, kind sir," repeated Arina, urgently. "What are we to do?"

"How can I think of any one? I can't do anything at all for you as things are."

"Who will help us if you do not?" said Arina, droop-

ing her head, and spreading her palms with an expression of melancholy discontent.

"Here you have asked for grain, and so I will give orders for some to be delivered to you," said the prince, after a short silence, during which Arina sighed, and Davuidka imitated her. "But I cannot do anything more."

Nekhliudof went into the entry. Mother and son with low bows followed their barin.

CHAPTER XII

"O-ОКН! alas for my wretchedness!" exclaimed Arina, sighing deeply.

She paused, and looked angrily at her son. Davuidka immediately turned around, and, clumsily lifting his stout leg, incased in a huge dirty boot, over the threshold, took refuge in the opposite door.

"What shall I do with him, father?" continued Arina, turning to the prince. "You yourself see what he is. He is not a bad muzhik; does n't get drunk, and is peaceable; would n't hurt a little child. It 's a sin to say hard things of him. There 's nothing bad about him, and God knows what has taken place in him to make him so bad to himself. You see he himself does not like it. Would you believe it, father,[1] my heart bleeds when I look at him, and see what suffering he undergoes. You see, whatever he is, he is my son. I pity him. Oh, how I pity him!.... You see, it is n't as if he had done anything against me or his father or the authorities. But, no; he 's a bashful man, almost like a child. How can he bear to be a widower? Help us out, benefactor," she said once more, evidently desirous of removing the unfavorable impression which her bitter words might have left on the prince. "Father, your excellency, I...." she went on to say in a confidential whisper, "my wit does not go far enough to explain him. It seems as if bad men had spoiled him."

[1] *Batyushka.*

She paused for a moment.

"If we could find the man, we might cure him."

"What nonsense you talk, Arina! How can he be spoiled?"

"My father,[1] they spoil him so that we can never make a man of him! Many bad people in the world! Out of ill-will they take a handful of earth from out of one's path, or something of that sort; and one is made a no-man forever after. Is n't that a sin? I think to myself, Might I not go to the old man Dunduk, who lives at Vorobyevka? He knows all sorts of words; and he knows herbs, and he can make charms; and he finds water with a cross. Would n't he help me?" said the woman. "Maybe he will cure him."

"What abjectness and superstition!" thought the young prince, shaking his head gloomily, and walking back with long strides through the village.

"What 's to be done with him? To leave him in this situation is impossible, both for myself and for the others and for him, — impossible," he said to himself, counting off on his fingers these reasons.

"I cannot bear to see him in this plight; but how extricate him? He renders nugatory all my best plans for the management of the estate. If such peasants are allowed, none of my dreams will ever be realized," he went on, experiencing a feeling of despite and anger against the peasant in consequence of the ruin of his plans. "To send him to Siberia, as Yakof suggests, against his will, would that be good for him? or to make him a soldier? That is best. At least I should be quit of him, and I could replace him by a decent muzhik."

Such was his decision.

He thought about this with satisfaction; but at the same time something obscurely told him that he was thinking with only one side of his mind, and not wholly right.

He paused.

"I will think about it some more," he said to himself. "To send him off as a soldier .... why? He is a good

[1] *Atyets tiu moï.* thou my father.

man, better than many; and I know.... Shall I free him?" he asked himself, putting the question from a different side of his mind. "It would n't be fair. Yes, it 's impossible."

But suddenly a thought occurred to him that greatly pleased him. He smiled with the expression of a man who has decided a difficult question.

"I will take him to the house," he said to himself. "I will look after him myself; and by means of kindness and advice, and selecting his employment, I will teach him to work, and reform him."

CHAPTER XIII

"THAT 's what I 'll do," said Nekhliudof to himself, with a pleasant self-consciousness; and then, recollecting that he had still to go to the rich muzhik Dutlof, he directed his steps to a lofty and ample establishment, with two chimneys, standing in the midst of the village.

As he passed a neighboring cottage on his way thither, he stopped to speak with a tall, slatternly peasant-woman of forty summers, who came to meet him.

"Good-morning, father," [1] she said, with some show of assurance, stopping at a little distance from him with a pleased smile and a low obeisance.

"Good-morning, nurse. How are you? I was just going to see your neighbor."

"Pretty well, sir, your excellency. It 's a good thing. But won't you come in? I beg you to. My old man would be very pleased."

"Well, I 'll come; and we 'll have a little talk together, nurse. Is this your house?"

"It is, sir."

And the nurse led the way into the izba. Nekhliudof followed her into the entry, and sat down on a tub, and began to smoke a cigarette.

"It 's hot inside. It 's better to sit down here and

[1] *Spraznikom, batyushka:* with a holiday, little father.

have our talk," he said, in reply to the woman's invitation to go into the izba.

The nurse was a well-preserved and handsome woman. In the features of her countenance, and especially in her big black eyes, there was a strong resemblance to the prince himself. She folded her hands under her apron, and, looking fearlessly at him, and incessantly moving her head, began to talk with him.

"Why is it, father? Why do you wish to visit Dutlof?"

"Oh, I am anxious for him to take thirty desyatins[1] of land of me, and enlarge his domain; and moreover I want him to join me in buying some wood also. You see, he has money, so why should it be idle? What do you think about it, nurse?"

"Well, what can I say? Of course, the Dutlofs are strong people; he's the leading muzhik in the whole estate," replied the nurse, shaking her head. "Last summer he built another building out of his own lumber. He did not demand anything at all of the estate. They have horses, and yearling colts besides, at least six troïkas, and cattle, cows, and sheep; so that it is a sight worth seeing when they are driven along the street from pasture, and the women of the house come out to get them into the yard. There is such a crush of animals at the gate that they can scarcely get through, so many of them there are. And two hundred beehives at the very least. He is a strong peasant, and must have money."

"But what do you think, — has he much money?" asked the prince.

"Men say, out of spite of course, that the old man has no little money. But he does not go round talking about it, and he does not tell even his sons, but he must have. Why should n't he take hold of the woodland? Perhaps he is afraid of getting a reputation for letting money go. Five years ago he and Shkalik the dvornik[2]

[1] Eighty-one acres.

[2] *Dvornik* sometimes means the owner as well as the caretaker of a *dvor*, or house and grounds.

went shares in getting a bit of meadow-land; and this Shkalik, some way or other, cheated him, so that the old man was three hundred rubles out of pocket. And from that time he has given it up. How can he help being forehanded, your excellency, father?" continued the nurse. "He has three farms, a big family, all workers; and besides, the old man — what harm in saying so? — is a capital manager. He is lucky in everything; it is surprising, — in his grain and in his horses and in his cattle and in his bees, and he's lucky in his children. Now he has got them all married off. He has found husbands for his daughters; and he has just married Ilyushka, and given him his freedom. He himself bought the letter of enfranchisement. And so a fine woman has come into his house."

"Well, do they live harmoniously?" asked the prince.

"As long as there's the right sort of a head to the house, they get along. Yet even the Dutlofs.... but of course that's among the women. The daughters-in-law bark at each other a little behind the oven, but the old man generally holds them in hand; and the sons live harmoniously."

The nurse was silent for a little.

"Now, the old man, we hear, wants to leave his eldest son, Karp, as master of the house. 'I am getting old,' says he. 'It's my business to attend to the bees.' Well, Karp is a good muzhik, a careful muzhik; but he doesn't manage to please the old man in the least. There's no sense in it."

"Well, perhaps Karp wants to speculate in land and wood. What do you think about it?" pursued the prince, wishing to learn from the woman all that she knew about her neighbors.

"Scarcely, sir,"[1] continued the nurse. "The old man has n't disclosed his money to his son. As long as he lives, of course, the money in the house will be under the old man's control; and it will increase all the time too."

"But is n't the old man willing?"

[1] *Batyushka.*

"He is afraid."

"What is he afraid of?"

"How is it possible, sir, for a seignorial peasant[1] to make a show of his money? And it 's a hard question to decide what to do with money anyway. Here he went into business with the dvornik, and was cheated. Where was he to get redress? And so he lost his money. But with the proprietor he would have any loss made good immediately, of course."

"Yes, hence...." said Nekhliudof, reddening. "But good-by, nurse."

"Good-by, sir, your excellency. Greatly obliged to you."

CHAPTER XIV

"HAD N'T I better go home?" mused Nekhliudof, as he strode along toward the Dutlof inclosure, and felt a boundless melancholy and moral weariness.

But at this moment the new deal gates were thrown open before him with a creaking sound, and a handsome, light-haired ruddy fellow of eighteen in wagoner's attire appeared, leading a troïka of powerful-limbed, shaggy, and still sweaty horses. He hastily brushed back his blond hair, and bowed to his barin.

"Tell me, is your father at home, Ilya?" asked Nekhliudof.

"At the beehouse, back of the yard," replied the youth, driving the horses, one after the other, through the half-opened gates.

"I will not give it up. I will make the proposal. I will do the best I can," reflected Nekhliudof; and, after waiting till the horses had passed on, he entered Dutlof's spacious yard.

It was plain to see that the manure had only recently been carried away. The ground was still black and damp; and in places, particularly in the hollows, were left red fibrous clots.

[1] *Muzhik gospodsky.*

In the yard and under the high sheds, many carts stood in orderly rows, together with plows, sledges, harrows, barrels, and all sorts of farming implements. Doves were flitting about, cooing in the shadows under the broad solid rafters. There was an odor of manure and tar.

In one corner Karp and Ignat were fitting a new cross-bar to a large iron-mounted, three-horse *telyega*, or wagon.

All three of Dutlof's sons bore a strong family resemblance. The youngest, Ilya, who had met Nekhliudof at the gate, was beardless, of smaller stature, ruddier complexion, and more neatly dressed, than the others. The second, Ignat, was rather taller and darker. He had a wedge-shaped beard; and, though he wore boots, a driver's shirt, and a lambskin cap, he had not such a festive, holiday appearance as his brother had.

The eldest, Karp, was still taller. He wore clogs, a gray kaftan, and a shirt without gussets. He had a reddish beard, trimmed; and his expression was serious, even to severity.

"Do you wish my father sent for, your excellency?" he asked, coming to meet the prince, and bowing slightly and awkwardly.

"No, I will go to him at the hives; I wish to see what he's building there. But I should like a talk with you," said Nekhliudof, drawing him to the other side of the yard, so that Ignat might not overhear what he was about to talk about with Karp.

The self-confidence and degree of pride noticeable in the deportment of the two peasants, and what the nurse had told the young prince, so troubled him, that it was difficult for him to make up his mind to speak with them about the matter proposed.

He had a sort of guilty feeling, and it seemed to him easier to speak with one brother out of the hearing of the other. Karp seemed surprised that his barin took him to one side, but he followed him.

"Listen," began Nekhliudof, awkwardly, "I wished to inquire of you if you had many horses."

"We have about five troïkas, also some colts," replied Karp, in a free-and-easy manner, scratching his back.

"Tell me, are your brothers going to take out relays of horses for the post?"

"We shall send out three troïkas to carry the mail. And there's Ilyushka, he has been off with his team; but he's just come back."

"Well, is that profitable for you? How much do you earn that way?"

"What do you mean by profit, your excellency? We at least get enough to live on and bait our horses; thank God for that!"

"Then, why don't you take hold of something else? You see, you might buy wood, or take more land."

"Of course, your excellency; we might rent some land if there were any convenient."

"I wish to make a proposition to you. Since you only make enough out of your teaming to live on, you had better take thirty desyatins of land from me. All that strip behind Sapovo I will let you have, and you can carry on your farming better."

And Nekhliudof, carried away by his plan for a peasant farm, which more than once he had proposed to himself, and deliberated about, began fluently to explain to the peasant his proposition about it.

Karp listened attentively to the prince's words.

"We are very grateful for your kindness," said he, when Nekhliudof stopped, and looked at him in expectation of his answer. "Of course here there's nothing very bad. To occupy himself with farming is better for a peasant than to go off as a whip. He goes among strangers; he sees all sorts of men; he gets wild. It's the very best thing for a peasant, to occupy himself with land."

"You think so, do you?"

"As long as my father is alive, how can I think, your excellency? It's as he wills."

"Take me to the beehives. I will talk with him."

"Come with me this way," said Karp, slowly directing himself to the shed back of the house. He opened

a low gate which led to the apiary, and, after letting the prince pass through, he shut it, and returned to Ignat, and silently took up his interrupted labors.

CHAPTER XV

Nekhliudof, stooping low, passed through the low gate, under the gloomy shed, to the apiary, which was situated back of the *dvor*, or yard.

A small space, surrounded by straw and a wattled hedge, through the chinks of which the light streamed, was filled with beehives symmetrically arranged, and covered with shavings, while the golden bees were humming around them. Everything was bathed in the warm and brilliant rays of the June sun.

From the gate a well-trodden footway led through the middle to a wooden side building, with a tin-foil image on it gleaming brightly in the sun.

A regular row of young lindens, lifting, above the thatched roof of the neighboring courtyard, their bushy tops, almost audibly rustled their dark green, fresh foliage, in unison with the sound of the buzzing bees. All the shadows from the covered hedge, from the lindens, and from the beehives fell dark and short on the delicate curling grass springing up between the catkins.

The bent, small figure of the old man, with his gray hair and bald spot shining in the sun, was visible near the door of a straw-thatched structure situated among the lindens. When he heard the creaking of the gate, the old man looked up, and, wiping his heated, sweaty face with the flap of his shirt, and smiling with pleasure, came to meet the prince.

In the apiary it was so comfortable, so pleasant, so warm, so free! The figure of the gray-haired old man, with thick wrinkles radiating from his eyes, and wearing wide shoes on his bare feet, as he came waddling along, good-naturedly and contentedly smiling, to welcome the prince to his own private possessions, was so ingenuously soothing that Nekhliudof for a moment forgot the

trying impressions of the morning, and his cherished dream came vividly up before him. He already saw all his peasants just as prosperous and contented as the old man Dutlof, and all smiling soothingly and pleasantly upon him, because to him alone they were indebted for their prosperity and happiness.

"Would you like a net, your excellency? The bees are angry now," said the old man, taking down from the fence a dirty gingham bag fragrant of honey, and handing it to the prince. "The bees know me, and don't sting," he added, with the pleasant smile that rarely left his handsome sunburned face.

"I don't need it either. Well, are they swarming yet?" asked Nekhliudof, also smiling, though without knowing why.

"Yes, they are swarming, Father Mitri Mikolayevitch,"[1] replied the old man, throwing an expression of peculiar endearment into this form of addressing his barin by his name and patronymic. "They have only just begun to swarm; it has been a cold spring, you know."

"I have just been reading in a book," began Nekhliudof, defending himself from a bee which had got entangled in his hair, and was buzzing under his ear, "that if the wax stands straight on the bars, then the bees swarm earlier. Therefore such hives as are made of boards .... with cross-b...."

"You don't want to wave your arms; that makes it worse," said the little old man. "Now don't you think you had better put on the net?"

Nekhliudof felt a sharp pain, but by some sort of childish egotism he did not wish to acknowledge it; and so, once more refusing the bag, continued to talk with the old man about the construction of hives, about which he had read in the "Maison Rustique," and which, according to his idea, ought to be made twice as large. But another bee stung him in the neck, and he lost the thread of his discourse, and stopped short in the midst of it.

[1] *Batyushka* Mitri Mikolayevitch, rustic for Dmitri Nikolayevitch.

"That's well enough, Father Mitri Mikolayevitch," said the old man, looking at the prince with paternal protection; "that's well enough in books, as you say. Yes; maybe the advice is given with some deceit, with some hidden meaning; but only just let him do as he advises, and we shall be the first to have a good laugh at his expense. And this happens! How are you going to teach the bees where to deposit their wax? They themselves put it on the cross-bar, sometimes straight and sometimes aslant. Just look here!" he continued, opening one of the nearest hives, and gazing at the entrance-hole blocked by a bee buzzing and crawling on the crooked comb. "Here's a young one. It sees; at its head sits the queen, but it lays the wax straight and sideways, both according to the position of the block," said the old man, evidently carried away by his interest in his occupation, and not heeding the prince's situation. "Now, to-day, it will fly with the pollen. To-day is warm; it's on the watch," he continued, again covering up the hive and pinning down with a cloth the crawling bee; and then brushing off into his rough palm a few of the insects from his wrinkled neck.

The bees did not sting him; but as for Nekhliudof, he could scarcely refrain from the desire to beat a retreat from the apiary. The bees had already stung him in three places, and were buzzing angrily on all sides around his head and neck.

"You have many hives?" he asked, as he retreated toward the gate.

"What God has given," replied Dutlof, sarcastically. "It is not necessary to count them, father; the bees don't like it. Now, your excellency, I wanted to ask a favor of you," he went on to say, pointing to the small posts standing by the fence. "It was about Osip, the nurse's husband. If you would only speak to him. In one village it's not right for one to treat a neighbor in such a mean way; it's not good."

"What has he done that's mean?.... Ah, how they sting!" exclaimed the prince, already seizing the latch of the gate.

"Every year now, he lets his bees out among my young ones. We could stand it, but strange bees get away their comb and kill them," said the old man, not heeding the prince's grimaces.

"Very well, by and by; at once," said Nekhliudof. And, having no longer strength of will to endure, he hastily beat a retreat through the gate, fighting his tormentors with both hands.

"Rub it with dirt. It's nothing," said the old man, coming to the dvor after the prince. The prince took some earth, and rubbed the spot where he had been stung, and reddened as he cast a quick glance at Karp and Ignat, who did not deign to look at him. Then he frowned angrily.

CHAPTER XVI

"I WANTED to ask you something about my sons, your excellency," said the old man, either pretending not to notice, or really not noticing, the prince's angry face.

"What?"

"Well, we are well provided with horses, praise the Lord! And that's our trade, and so we don't have to work on your land."

"What do you mean?"

"If you would only be kind enough to let my sons have leave of absence, then Ilyushka and Ignat would take three troïkas, and go out teaming for all summer. Maybe they'd earn something."

"Where would they go?"

"Just as it happened," replied Ilyushka, who, at this moment, having put the horses under the shed, joined his father. "The Kadminski boys went with eight horses to Romen. They not only earned their own living, they say, but brought back a gain of more than three hundred per cent. Fodder, they say, is cheap at *Odest*."

"Well, that 's the very thing I wanted to talk with you about," said the prince, addressing the old man, and anxious to draw him shrewdly into a talk about the farm. "Tell me, please, if it would be more profitable to go to teaming than farming at home?"

"Why not more profitable, your excellency?" said Ilyushka, again putting in his word, and at the same time quickly shaking back his hair. "There 's no way of keeping horses at home."

"Well, how much do you earn in the summer?"

"Since spring, as feed was high, we went to Kief with merchandise, and to Kursk, and back again to Moscow with grits; and in that way we earned our living. And our horses had enough, and we brought back fifteen rubles in money."

"There 's no harm in taking up with an honorable profession, whatever it is," said the prince, again addressing the old man. "But it seems to me that you might find another form of activity. And besides, this work is such that a young man goes everywhere. He sees all sorts of people, — may get wild," he added, quoting Karp's words.

"What can we peasants take up with, if not teaming?" objected the old man, with his sweet smile. "If you are a good driver, you get enough to eat, and so do your horses; but, as regards mischief, they are just the same as at home, thank the Lord![1] It is n't the first time that they have been. I have been myself, and never saw any harm in it, nothing but good."

"How many other things you might find to do at home! with fields and meadows...."

"How is it possible?" interrupted Ilyushka, with animation. "We were born for this. All the regulations are at our fingers' ends. We like the work. It's the most enjoyable we have, your excellency. How we like to go teaming!"

"Your excellency, will you not do us the honor of coming into the house? You have not yet seen our

[1] *Slava-ti Gospodi*, glory to thee, O Lord.

new izba," said the old man, bowing low, and winking to his son.

Ilyushka hastened into the house, and Nekhliudof and the old man followed after him.

CHAPTER XVII

As soon as he got into the house, the old man bowed once more; then, using his coat-tail to dust the bench in the front room, he smiled, and said: —

"What do you want of us, your excellency?"

The hut was white and roomy, with a chimney; and it had a loft and berths. The fresh aspen-wood beams, between which could be seen the moss, scarcely withered, were as yet not turned dark. The new benches and the loft were not polished smooth, and the floor as yet showed no marks of wear. One young peasant woman, rather lean, with a serious oval face, was sitting on a berth, and using her foot to rock a hanging cradle that was suspended from the ceiling by a long hook. This was Ilya's wife.

In the cradle slept a suckling child, very quietly breathing, with closed eyes, and with his arms and legs sprawled out.

Another young woman, robust and rosy-cheeked, — Karp's wife, — with her sleeves rolled up above her elbows, showing strong arms and hands red even higher than her wrists, was standing in front of the oven, and mincing onions in a wooden dish.

A pock-marked woman, showing signs of pregnancy, which she tried to conceal, was standing near the oven. The room was hot, not only from the summer sun, but from the heat of the oven; and there was a strong smell of baking bread.

Two flaxen-headed little boys and a girl gazed down from the loft upon the prince, with faces full of curiosity. They had come in, expecting something to eat.

Nekhliudof was delighted to see this happy household; and at the same time he felt a sense of constraint

in the presence of these women and children, all looking at him. He flushed a little as he sat down on the bench.

"Give me a crust of hot bread; I am fond of it," said he, and the flush deepened.

Karp's wife cut off a huge slice of bread, and handed it on a plate to the prince. Nekhliudof said nothing, not knowing what to say. The women also were silent; the old man smiled benevolently.

"Well, now, why am I so awkward? as if I were to blame for something," thought Nekhliudof. "Why should n't I make my proposition about the farm? What stupidity!"

Still he remained silent.

"Well, Father Mitri Mikolayevitch, what are you going to say about my boys' proposal?" asked the old man.

"I should absolutely advise you not to send them away, but to have them stay at home, and work," said Nekhliudof, suddenly collecting his wits. "You know what I have proposed to you. Go in with me, and buy some of the crown woods, and some more land...."

"But how are we going to get money to buy it, your excellency?" Dutlof asked, interrupting the prince.

"Why, it is n't very much wood, only two hundred rubles' worth," replied Nekhliudof.

The old man gave an indignant laugh.

"Very good, if that's all. Why not buy it?" said he.

"Have n't you money enough?" asked the prince, reproachfully.

"Okh, sir, your excellency!" replied the old man, with grief expressed in his tone, looking apprehensively toward the door. "Only enough to feed my family, not enough to buy woodland."

"But you know you have money, — what do you do with it?" insisted Nekhliudof.

The old man suddenly fell into a terrible state of excitement; his eyes flashed, his shoulders began to twitch.

"Wicked men may say all sorts of things about me," he muttered in a trembling voice. "But, so may God be my witness!" he said, growing more and more animated, and turning his eyes toward the ikon, "may my eyes crack, may I perish with all my family, if I have anything more than the fifteen silver rubles which Ilyushka brought home; and we have to pay the poll-tax, you yourself know that. And we built the hut...."

"Well, well, all right," said the prince, rising from the bench. "Good-by, friends."[1]

CHAPTER XVIII

"My God! my God!" was Nekhliudof's mental exclamation, as with long strides he hastened home through the shady alleys of his weed-grown garden, and, absent-mindedly, snapped off the leaves and branches which came in his way.

"Is it possible that my dreams about the ends and duties of my life are all idle nonsense? Why is it hard for me, and mournful, as if I were dissatisfied with myself because I imagined that, having once begun this course, I should constantly experience the fullness of the morally pleasant feeling which I had when, for the first time, these thoughts came to me?"

And with extraordinary vividness and distinctness he saw in his imagination that happy moment which he had experienced a year before.

He had arisen very early, before every one else in the house, and feeling painfully those secret, indescribable impulses of youth, he had gone aimlessly out into the garden, and from there into the woods; and, amid the energetic, but tranquil, nature pulsing with the new life of Maytime, he had wandered long alone, without thought, and suffering from the exuberance of some feeling, and not finding any expression for it.

[1] *Proshchaïte, khozyaeva; khozyaeva* includes all the adult members of the family.

Then, with all the allurement of what is unknown, his youthful imagination brought up before him the voluptuous form of a woman; and it seemed to him that was the object of his indescribable longing. But another, deeper sentiment said, *Not that*, and impelled him to search and be disturbed in mind.

Without thought or desire, as always happens after extra activity, he lay on his back under a tree, and looked at the diaphanous morning clouds drifting over him across the deep, endless sky.

Suddenly, without any reason, the tears sprang to his eyes, and God knows in what way the thought came to him with perfect clearness, filling all his soul and giving him intense delight, — the thought that love and righteousness are the same as truth and enjoyment, and that there is only one truth, and only one possible happiness, in the world.

The deeper feeling this time did not say, *Not that.* He sat up, and began to verify this thought.

"That is it, that is it," said he to himself, in a sort of ecstasy, measuring all his former convictions, all the phenomena of his life, by the truth just discovered to him, and as it seemed to him absolutely new.

"What stupidity! All that I knew, all that I believed in, all that I loved," he had said to himself. "Love is self-denying; this is the only true happiness independent of chance," he had said over and over again, smiling and waving his hands.

Applying this thought on every side to life, and finding in it confirmation both of life and that inner voice which told him that this was *it*, he had experienced a new feeling of pleasant agitation and enthusiasm.

"And so I ought to do good if I would be happy," he thought; and all his future vividly came up before him, not as an abstraction, but imaged in the form of the life of a proprietor.

He saw before him a huge field, conterminous with his whole life, which he was to consecrate to the good, and in which really he should find happiness. There was no need for him to search for a sphere of activity;

it was all ready. He had one out-and-out obligation: he had his serfs.....

And what comfortable and beneficent labor lay before him! "To work for this simple, impressionable, incorruptible class of people; to lift them from poverty; to give them pleasure; to give them education, which, fortunately, I will turn to use in correcting their faults, which arise from ignorance and superstition; to develop their morals; to induce them to love the right..... What a brilliant, happy future! And, besides all this, I, who am going to do this for my own happiness, shall take delight in their appreciation, shall see how every day I shall go farther and farther toward my predestined end. A wonderful future! Why could I not have seen this before?

"And besides," so he had thought at the same time, "who will hinder me from being happy in love for a woman, in enjoyment of family?"

And his youthful imagination portrayed before him a still more bewitching future.

"I and my wife, whom I shall love as no one ever loved a wife before in the world, we shall always live amid this restful, poetical, rural nature, with our children, maybe, and with my old aunt. We have our love for each other, our love for our children; and we shall both know that our aim is the right. We shall help each other in pressing on to this goal. I shall make general arrangements; I shall give general aid when it is right; I shall carry on the farm, the savings-bank, the workshop. And she, with her dear little head, and dressed in a simple white dress, which she lifts above her dainty ankle as she steps through the mud, will go to the peasants' school, to the hospital, to some unfortunate peasant who in truth does not deserve help, and everywhere carry comfort and aid..... Children, old men, women, will wait for her, and look on her as some angel, as on Providence. Then she will return, and hide from me the fact that she has been to see the unfortunate peasant, and given him money; but I shall know all, and give her a hearty hug, and rain kisses

thick and fast on her lovely eyes, her modestly blushing cheeks, and her smiling, rosy lips."

* * * * * *

CHAPTER XIX

"WHERE are those dreams?" the young man now asked himself as he walked home after his round of visits. "Here more than a year has passed since I have been seeking for happiness in this course, and what have I found? It is true, I sometimes feel that I can be contented with myself; but this is a dry, doubtful kind of content. Yet, no; I am simply dissatisfied! I am dissatisfied because I find no happiness here; and I desire, I passionately long for, happiness. I have not experienced delight, I have cut myself off from all that gives it. Wherefore? for what end? Does that make it easier for any one?

"My aunt was right when she wrote that it is easier to find happiness than to give it to others. Have my peasants become any richer? Have they learned anything? or have they shown any moral improvement? Not the least. They are no better off, but it grows harder and harder every day for me. If I saw any success in my undertakings, if I saw any signs of gratitude, ... but, no! I see falsely directed routine, vice, untruthfulness, helplessness. I am wasting the best years of my life."

Thus he said to himself, and he recollected that his neighbors, as he heard from his nurse, called him "a mere boy"; that he had no money left in the counting-room; that his new threshing-machine, which he had invented, much to the amusement of the peasants, only made a noise, and did not thresh anything when it had been set in motion for the first time in presence of numerous spectators, who had gathered at the threshing-floor; that from day to day he had to expect the coming of the district judge for the list of goods and chattels, which he had neglected to make out, hav-

ing been engrossed in various new enterprises on his estate.

And suddenly there arose before him, just as vividly as before that walk through the forest and his ideal of rural life had arisen, — just as vividly there appeared his little university room at Moscow, where he used to sit half the night before a solitary candle, with his chum and his favorite boy friend.

They used to read for five hours on a stretch, and study such stupid lessons in civil law; and when they were done with them, they would send for supper, open a bottle of champagne, and talk about the future which awaited them.

How entirely different the young student had thought the future would be! Then the future was full of enjoyment, of varied occupation, brilliant with success, and beyond a peradventure sure to bring them both to what seemed to them the greatest blessing in the world, — to fame.

"He will go on, and go on rapidly, in that path," thought Nekhliudof of his friend; "but I...."

But by this time he was already mounting the steps to his house; and near it were standing a score of peasants and house-servants, waiting for their barin with various requests. And this brought him back from dreams to the reality.

Among the crowd was a ragged and blood-stained peasant-woman, who was lamenting and complaining of her father-in-law, who had been beating her. There were two brothers, who for two years past had been going on shares in their domestic arrangements, and now looked at each other with hatred and despair. There was also an unshaven, gray-haired domestic serf, with hands trembling from the effects of intoxication; and this man was brought to the prince by his son, a gardener, who complained of his disorderly conduct. There was a peasant, who had driven his wife out of the house because she had not worked any all the spring. There was also the wife, a sick woman, who sobbed, but said nothing, as she sat on the grass by the

steps, — only showed her inflamed and swollen leg, carelessly wrapped up in a filthy rag.

Nekhliudof listened to all the petitions and complaints; and after he had given advice to one, blamed others, and replied to still others, he began to feel a sort of whimsical sensation of weariness, shame, weakness, and regret. And he went to his room.

CHAPTER XX

In the small room occupied by Nekhliudof stood an old leather divan decorated with copper nails, a few chairs of the same description, an old-fashioned inlaid extension-table with scallops and brass mountings, and strewn with papers, and an old-fashioned English grand piano with narrow keys, broken and twisted.

Between the windows hung a large mirror with an old carved frame gilded. On the floor, near the table, lay packages of papers, books, and accounts.

This room, on the whole, had a characterless and disorderly appearance; and this lively disorder presented a sharp contrast with the affectedly aristocratic arrangement of the other rooms of the great mansion.

When Nekhliudof reached his room, he flung his hat angrily on the table, and sat down in a chair which stood near the piano, crossed his legs, and shook his head.

"Will you have lunch, your excellency?" asked a tall, thin, wrinkled old woman, who entered just at this instant, dressed in a cap, a great kerchief, and a print dress.

Nekhliudof looked at her for a moment or two in silence, as if collecting his thoughts.

"No, I don't wish anything, nurse," said he, and again fell into thought.

The nurse shook her head at him in some vexation, and sighed.

"Eh! Father Dmitri Nikolayevitch, are you mel

ancholy? Such tribulation comes, but it will pass away. God knows...."

"I am not melancholy. What have you brought, Malanya Finogenovna?" replied Nekhliudof, endeavoring to smile.

"Ain't melancholy! can't I see?" the nurse began to say with warmth. "The whole livelong day to be all sole alone![1] And you take everything to heart so, and look out for everything; and besides, you scarcely eat anything. What's the reason of it? If you'd only go to the city, or visit your neighbors, as others do! You are young, and the idea of bothering over things so! Pardon me, little father, I will sit down," pursued the nurse, taking a seat near the door. "You see, we have got into such a habit that we lose fear. Is that the way gentlemen do? There's no good in it. You are only ruining yourself, and the people are spoiled. That's just like our people; they don't understand it, that's a fact. You had better go to your auntie. What she wrote was good sense," said the nurse, admonishing him.

Nekhliudof kept growing more and more dejected. His right hand, resting on his knee, lazily struck the piano, making a chord, a second, a third....

Nekhliudof moved nearer, drew his other hand from his pocket, and began to play. The chords which he made were sometimes not premeditated, were occasionally not even according to rule, often remarkable for absurdity, and did not show that he had any musical talent; but the exercise gave him a certain undefinable melancholy enjoyment.

At every modification in the harmony, he waited with muffled heart-beat for what would come out of it; and when anything came, he, in a dark sort of way, completed with his imagination what was missing.

It seemed to him that he heard a hundred melodies, and a chorus, and an orchestra simultaneously joining in with his harmony. But his chief pleasure was in the powerful activity of his imagination; confused and

[1] *Dyen dyenskoï aaïn-adinyoshenek.*

broken, but bringing up with striking clearness before him the most varied, mixed, and absurd images and pictures from the past and the future.

Now it presents the puffy figure of Davuidka Byelui, timidly blinking his white eyelashes at the sight of his mother's black fist with its network of veins; his bent back, and huge hands covered with white hairs, exhibiting a uniform patience and submission to fate, sufficient to overcome torture and deprivation.

Then he saw the brisk, presuming nurse, and somehow seemed to picture her going through the villages, and announcing to the peasants that they ought to hide their money from the proprietors; and he unconsciously said to himself, "Yes, it is necessary to hide money from the proprietors."

Then suddenly there came up before him the fair head of his future wife, for some reason weeping, and leaning on his shoulder in deep grief.

Then he seemed to see Churis's kindly blue eyes looking affectionately at his pot-bellied little son. Yes, he saw in him a helper and savior, apart from his son. "That is love," he whispered.

Then he remembered Yukhvanka's mother, remembered the expression of patience and conciliation which, notwithstanding her prominent teeth and her irregular features, he recognized on her aged face.

"It must be that I have been the first during her seventy years of life to recognize her good qualities," he said to himself, and whispered, "Strange"; but he continued still to drum on the piano, and to listen to the sounds.

Then he vividly recalled his retreat from the bees, and the expressions on the faces of Karp and Ignat, who evidently wanted to laugh, though they made believe not look at him. He reddened, and involuntarily glanced at the nurse, who still remained sitting by the door, looking at him with silent attention, occasionally shaking her gray head.

Here, suddenly, he seemed to see a troïka of sleek horses, and Ilyushka's handsome, robust form, with

bright curls, gayly shining, narrow blue eyes, fresh complexion, and delicate down just beginning to appear on lip and chin.

He remembered how Ilyushka was afraid that he would not be permitted to go teaming, and how eagerly he argued in favor of the work that he liked so well. And he sees the gray, early, misty morning, and the smooth paved road, and the long line of three-horse wagons, heavily laden and protected by mats, and marked with big black letters. The stout, contented, well-fed horses, thundering along with their bells, arching their backs, and tugging on the traces, pull in unison up the hill, forcibly straining on their long-nailed shoes over the smooth road.

And coming toward the train of wagons down the hill dashes the postman, with jingling bells, which are echoed far and wide by the great forest extending along on both sides of the road.

"*A-a-aï!*" in a loud, boyish voice, shouts the *yamshchik*, or head driver, who has a badge on his lambskin cap, and swings his whip around his head.

Beside the front wheel of the front team, the red-headed, cross-looking Karp is walking heavily in huge boots. From behind the mat in the second team Ilyushka shows his handsome head, as he sits on the driver's seat gloriously playing the bugle. Three troïka-wagons loaded with boxes, with creaking wheels, with the sound of bells and shouts, file by. Ilyushka once more hides his handsome face under the matting, and falls off to sleep.

Now it is a fresh, clear evening. The deal gates open for the weary horses as they halt in front of the tavern yard; and one after the other, the high mat-covered teams roll in across the planks that lie at the gates, and come to rest under the wide sheds.

Ilyushka gayly exchanges greetings with the light-complexioned, wide-bosomed landlady, who asks, "Have you come far? and will there be many of you to supper?" and at the same time looks with pleasure on the handsome lad, with her bright, kindly eyes.

And now, having unharnessed the horses, he goes into the warm house[1] crowded with people, crosses himself, sits down at the generous wooden bowl, and enters into lively conversation with the landlady and his companions.

And then he goes to bed in the open air under the stars which gleam down into the shed. His bed is fragrant hay, and he is near the horses, which, stamping and snorting, eat their fodder in the wooden cribs. He goes to the shed, turns toward the east, and after crossing himself thirty times in succession on his broad brawny chest, and throwing back his bright curls, he repeats "Our Father" and "Lord have mercy" a score of times, and wrapping himself, head and all, in his cloak, sleeps the healthy, dreamless sleep of strong, fresh manhood.

And here he sees in his vision the city of Kief, with its saints and throngs of priests, Romen, with its merchants and merchandise; he sees *Odest*, and the distant blue sea studded with white sails, and the city of Tsargrad,[2] with its golden palaces, and the white-breasted, black-eyed Turkish maidens; and thither he flies, lifting himself on invisible wings.

He flies freely and easily, always farther and farther away, and sees below him golden cities bathed in clear effulgence, and the blue sky with bright stars, and a blue sea with white sails; and smoothly and pleasantly he flies, always farther and farther away. ....

"Splendid!" whispers Nekhliudof to himself; and the thought, "Why am I not Ilyushka?" comes to him.

[1] *Izba.* [2] Constantinople.

LUCERNE

FROM THE RECOLLECTIONS OF PRINCE NEKHLIUDOF

JULY 20, 1857.

YESTERDAY evening I arrived at Lucerne, and put up at the best inn there, the Schweitzerhof.

"Lucerne, the chief city of the canton, situated on the shore of the Vierwaldstätter See," says Murray, "is one of the most romantic places of Switzerland: here cross three important highways, and it is only an hour's distance by steamboat to Mount Righi, from which is obtained one of the most magnificent views in the world."

Whether that be true or no, other Guides say the same thing, and consequently at Lucerne there are throngs of travelers of all nationalities, especially the English.

The magnificent five-storied building of the Hotel Schweitzerhof is situated on the quay, at the very edge of the lake, where in olden times there used to be the crooked covered wooden bridge[1] with chapels on the corners and pictures on the roof. Now, thanks to the tremendous inroad of Englishmen, with their necessities, their tastes, and their money, they have torn down the old bridge, and in its place erected a granite quay, straight as a stick. On the quay they have built straight, quadrangular five-storied houses; in front of the houses they have set out two rows of lindens and provided them with supports, and between the lindens is the usual supply of green benches.

This is the promenade; and here back and forth

[1] Hofbrück, torn down in 1852.

stroll the Englishwomen in their Swiss straw hats, and the Englishmen in simple and comfortable attire, and rejoice in their work. Possibly these quays and houses and lindens and Englishmen would be excellent in their way anywhere else, but here they seem discordant amid this strangely magnificent, and at the same time indescribably harmonious and smiling nature.

As soon as I went up to my room, and opened the window facing the lake, the beauty of the sheet of water, of the mountains, and of the sky, at the first moment literally dazzled and overwhelmed me. I experienced an inward unrest, and the necessity of expressing in some manner the feelings that suddenly filled my soul to overflowing. I felt a desire to embrace, powerfully to embrace, some one, to tickle him, or to pinch him; in short, to do to him and to myself something extraordinary.

It was seven o'clock in the evening. The rain had been falling all day, but now it had cleared.

The lake, iridescent as melted sulphur, and dotted with boats, which left behind them vanishing trails, spread out before my windows smooth, motionless as it were, between the variegated green shores. Farther away it was contracted between two monstrous headlands, and, darkling, set itself against and disappeared behind a confused pile of mountains, clouds, and glaciers. In the foreground stretched a panorama of moist, fresh green shores, with reeds, meadows, gardens, and villas. Farther away, the dark green wooded heights, crowned with the ruins of feudal castles; in the background, the rolling, pale lilac-colored vista of mountains, with fantastic peaks built up of crags and pallid snow-capped summits. And everything was bathed in a fresh, transparent azure atmosphere, and kindled by the warm rays of the setting sun, bursting forth through the riven skies.

Not on the lake or on the mountains or in the skies was there a single completed line, a single unmixed color, a single moment of repose; everywhere motion, irregularity, fantasy, endless conglomeration and variety

of shades and lines; and above all, a calm, a softness, a unity, and the inevitability of beauty.

And here amid this indeterminate, kaleidoscopic, unfettered loveliness, before my very window, stretched stupidly, compelling the gaze, the white line of the quay, the lindens with their supports, and the green seats, — miserable, tasteless creations of human ingenuity, not subordinated, like the distant villas and ruins, to the general harmony of the beautiful scene, but on the contrary brutally opposed to it. ....

Constantly, though against my will, my eyes were attracted to that horribly straight line of the quay; and mentally I should have liked to get rid of it, to demolish it like a black spot which should disfigure the nose beneath one's eye.

But the quay with the sauntering Englishmen remained where it was, and I involuntarily tried to find a point of view where it would be out of my sight. I succeeded in finding such a view; and till dinner was ready I took delight, alone by myself, in this incomplete and therefore the more enjoyable feeling of oppression that one experiences in the solitary contemplation of natural beauty.

About half-past seven I was called to dinner. Two long tables, accommodating at least a hundred persons, were spread in the great, magnificently decorated dining-room on the first floor. The silent gathering of the guests lasted three minutes, — the rustle of women's gowns, the soft steps, the softly spoken words addressed to the courtly and elegant waiters. And all the places were occupied by ladies and gentlemen dressed elegantly, even richly, and for the most part in perfect taste.

As is apt to be the case in Switzerland, the majority of the guests were English, and this gave the ruling characteristics of the common table: that is, a strict decorum regarded as an obligation, a reserve founded not in pride but in the absence of any necessity for social relationship, and finally a uniform sense of satisfaction felt by each in the comfortable and agreeable gratification of his wants.

On all sides gleamed the whitest laces, the whitest collars, the whitest teeth, — natural and artificial, — the whitest complexions and hands. But the faces, many of which were very handsome, bore the expression merely of individual prosperity, and absolute absence of interest in all that surrounded them unless it bore directly on their own individual selves; and the white hands, glittering with rings or protected by mitts, moved only for the purpose of straightening collars, cutting meat, or filling wine-glasses; no soul-felt emotion was betrayed in these actions.

Occasionally members of some one family would exchange remarks in subdued voices, about the excellence of such and such a dish or wine, or about the beauty of the view from Mount Righi.

Individual tourists, whether men or women, sat beside one another in silence, and did not even seem to see one another. If it happened occasionally that, out of this five-score human beings, two spoke to each other, the topic of their conversation was certain to be the weather, or the ascent of the Righi.

Knives and forks scarcely rattled on the plates, so perfect was the observance of propriety; and no one dared to convey pease and vegetables to the mouth otherwise than on the fork. The waiters, involuntarily subdued by the universal silence, asked in a whisper what wine you would be pleased to order.

Such dinners always depress me: I dislike them, and before they are over I become blue. It always seems to me as if I had done something wrong; just as when I was a boy I was set upon a chair in consequence of some naughtiness, and bidden ironically, "Now rest a little while, my dear young fellow." And all the time my young blood was pulsing through my veins, and in the other room I could hear the merry shouts of my brothers.

I used to try to rebel against this feeling of being choked down, which I experienced at such dinners, but in vain. All these dead-and-alive faces have an irresistible influence over me, and I myself become also as

one dead. I have no desires, I have no thoughts; I do not even observe.

At first I attempted to enter into conversation with my neighbors; but I got no response beyond the phrases which had probably been repeated in that place a hundred thousand times, a hundred thousand times by the same persons.

And yet these people were by no means all stupid and feelingless; but evidently many of them, though they seemed so dead, led self-centered lives, just as I did, and in many cases far more complicated and interesting ones than my own. Why, then, should they deprive themselves of one of the greatest enjoyments of life, — the enjoyment that comes from the intercourse of man with man?

How different it used to be in our *pension* at Paris, where twenty of us, belonging to as many different nationalities, professions, and individualities, met together at a common table, and, under the influence of the Gallic sociability, found the keenest zest!

There, immediately, from one end of the table to the other, the conversation, sandwiched with witticisms and puns, though often in a broken speech, became general. There every one, without being solicitous for the proprieties, said whatever came into his head. There we had our own philosopher, our own disputant, our own *bel esprit*, our own butt, — all common property.

There, immediately after dinner, we would move the table to one side, and, without paying too much attention to rhythm, take to dancing the polka on the dusty carpet, and often keep it up till evening. There, though we were rather flirtatious, and not overwise or dignified, still we were human beings.

And the Spanish countess with romantic proclivities, and the Italian *abbate* who insisted on declaiming from the "Divine Comedy" after dinner, and the American doctor who had the *entrée* into the Tuileries, and the young dramatic author with his long hair, and the pianist who, according to her own account, had composed the best polka in existence, and the unhappy widow who

was a beauty, and wore three rings on every finger, — all of us enjoyed this society, which, though somewhat superficial, was human and pleasant. And we each carried away from it hearty recollections of the others, superficial or serious, as the case might be.

But at these English *table-d'hôte* dinners, as I look at all these laces, ribbons, jewels, pomaded locks, and silken gowns, I often think how many living women would be happy, and would make others happy, with these adornments.

Strange to think how many friends and lovers — most fortunate friends and lovers — are, perhaps, sitting side by side without knowing it! And God knows why they never come to this knowledge, and never give each other this happiness, which they might so easily give, and which they so long for.

I began to feel depressed, as usual, after such a dinner; and, without waiting for dessert, I sallied out in the most gloomy frame of mind for a constitutional through the city. My melancholy frame of mind was not relieved, but was rather confirmed, by the narrow, muddy streets without lanterns, the shuttered shops, the encounters with drunken workmen, and with women hastening after water, or in bonnets, glancing around them as they glided down the alleys or along the walls.

It was perfectly dark in the streets when I returned to the hotel without casting a glance about me, or having an idea in my head. I hoped that sleep would put an end to my melancholy. I experienced that horrible spiritual chill, loneliness, and heaviness, which sometimes, without any reason, beset those who are just arrived in any new place.

Looking down at my feet, I walked along the quay to the Schweitzerhof, when suddenly my ear was struck by the strains of a peculiar but thoroughly agreeable and sweet music.

These strains had an immediately enlivening effect on me. It was as if a bright, cheerful light had poured into my soul. I felt contented, gay. My slumbering

attention was awakened again to all surrounding objects; and the beauty of the night and the lake, to which, till then, I had been indifferent, suddenly came over me with quickening force like something new.

I involuntarily took in at a glance the dark sky with gray clouds flecking its deep blue, now lighted by the rising moon, the glassy, dark green lake, with its surface reflecting the lighted windows, and far away the snowy mountains; and I heard the croaking of the frogs over on the Fröschenburg shore, and the dewy fresh call of the quail.

Directly in front of me, in the spot whence the sounds of music had first come, and which still especially attracted my attention, I saw, amid the semi-darkness on the street, a throng of people standing in a semicircle, and in front of the crowd, at a little distance, a small man in dark clothes.

Behind the throng and the man, there stood out harmoniously against the blue, ragged sky, gray and blue, the black tops of a few Lombardy poplars in some garden, and, rising majestically on high, the two stern spires that stand on the towers of the ancient cathedral.

I drew nearer, and the strains became more distinct. At some distance I could clearly distinguish the full accords of a guitar, sweetly swelling in the evening air, and several voices, which, while taking turns with one another, did not sing any definite theme, but gave suggestions of one in places wherever the melody was most pronounced.

The theme was in somewhat the nature of a mazurka, sweet and graceful. The voices sounded now near at hand, now far distant; now a bass was heard, now a tenor, now a falsetto such as the Tyrolese warblers are wont to sing.

It was not a song, but the graceful, masterly sketch of a song. I could not comprehend what it was, but it was beautiful.

Those voluptuous, soft chords of the guitar, that sweet, gentle melody, that solitary figure of the man in black, amid the fantastic environment of the dark lake,

the gleaming moon, and the twin spires of the cathedral rising in majestic silence, and the black tops of the poplars, — all was strange and perfectly beautiful, or at least seemed so to me.

All the confused, arbitrary impressions of life suddenly became full of meaning and beauty. It seemed to me as if a fresh fragrant flower had sprung up in my soul. In place of the weariness, dullness, and indifference toward everything in the world, which I had been feeling the moment before, I experienced a necessity for love, a fullness of hope, and an unbounded enjoyment of life.

"What dost thou desire, what dost thou long for?" an inner voice seemed to say. "Here it is. Thou art surrounded on all sides by beauty and poetry. Breathe it in, in full, deep draughts, as long as thou hast strength. Enjoy it to the full extent of thy capacity. 'T is all thine, all blessed!" ....

I drew nearer. The little man was, as it seemed, a traveling Tyrolese. He stood before the windows of the hotel, one leg advanced, his head thrown back; and, as he thrummed on the guitar, he sang his graceful song in all those different voices.

I immediately felt an affection for this man, and a gratefulness for the change which he had brought about in me.

The singer, as far as I was able to judge, was dressed in an old black coat. He had short black hair, and he wore a civilian's hat which was no longer new. There was nothing artistic in his attire, but his clever and youthfully gay motions and pose, together with his diminutive stature, formed a pleasing and at the same time pathetic spectacle.

On the steps, in the windows, and on the balconies of the brilliantly lighted hotel, stood ladies handsomely decorated and attired, gentlemen with polished collars, porters and lackeys in gold-embroidered liveries; in the street, in the semicircle of the crowd, and farther along on the sidewalk, among the lindens, were gathered groups of well-dressed waiters, cooks in white caps and aprons,

and young girls wandering about with arms about each others' waists.

All, it seemed, were under the influence of the same feeling as I myself experienced. All stood in silence around the singer, and listened attentively. Silence reigned, except in the pauses of the song, when there came from far away across the waters the regular click of a hammer, and from the Fröschenburg shore rang in fascinating monotone the voices of the frogs, interrupted by the mellow, monotonous call of the quail.

The little man in the darkness, in the midst of the street, poured out his heart like a nightingale, in couplet after couplet, song after song. Though I had come close to him, his singing continued to give me greater and greater gratification.

His voice, which was of great power, was extremely pleasant and tender; the taste and feeling for rhythm which he displayed in the control of it were extraordinary, and proved that he had great natural gifts.

After he sung each couplet, he invariably repeated the theme in variation, and it was evident that all his graceful variations came to him at the instant, spontaneously.

Among the crowd, and above on the Schweitzerhof, and near by on the boulevard, were heard frequent murmurs of approval, though generally the most respectful silence reigned.

The balconies and the windows kept filling more and more with handsomely dressed men and women leaning on their elbows, and picturesquely illuminated by the lights in the house.

Promenaders came to a halt, and in the darkness on the quay stood men and women in little groups. Near me, at some distance from the common crowd, stood an aristocratic cook and lackey, smoking their cigars. The cook was forcibly impressed by the music, and at every high falsetto note enthusiastically nodded his head to the lackey, and nudged him with his elbow with an expression of astonishment which seemed to say, "How he sings! hey?"

The lackey, by whose undissimulated smile I could mark the depth of feeling he experienced, replied to the cook's nudges by shrugging his shoulders, as if to show that it was hard enough for him to be made enthusiastic, and that he had heard much better music.

In one of the pauses of his song, while the minstrel was clearing his throat, I asked the lackey who he was, and if he often came there.

"Twice in the summer he comes here," replied the lackey. "He is from Aargau; he gets his livelihood by begging."

"Tell me, do many like him come round here?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," replied the lackey, not comprehending the full force of what I asked; but, immediately after, recollecting himself, he added, "Oh, no. This one is the only one I ever heard here. No one else."

At this moment the little man had finished his first song, was briskly twanging his guitar, and said something in his German *patois*, which I could not understand, but which brought forth a hearty round of laughter from the surrounding throng.

"What was that he said?" I asked.

"He said his throat is dried up, he would like some wine," replied the lackey, who was standing near me.

"What? is he rather fond of the glass?"

"Yes, all that sort of people are," replied the lackey, smiling and pointing at the minstrel.

The minstrel took off his cap, and swinging his guitar went toward the hotel. Raising his head, he addressed the ladies and gentlemen standing by the windows and on the balconies, saying in a half-Italian, half-German accent, and with the same intonation as jugglers use in speaking to their audiences: —

"*Messieurs et mesdames, si vous croyez que je gagne quelque chose, vous vous trompez: je ne suis qu'un pauvre tiaple.*"

He stood in silence a moment, but as no one gave him anything, he once more took up his guitar, and said: —

"*A présent, messieurs et mesdames, je vous chanterai l'air du Righi.*"

His hotel audience made no response, but stood in expectation of the coming song. Below on the street a laugh went round, probably in part because he had expressed himself so strangely, and in part because no one had given him anything.

I gave him a few centimes, which he deftly changed from one hand to the other, and bestowed them in his vest-pocket; and then, replacing his cap, began once more to sing; it was the graceful, sweet Tyrolese melody which he had called *l'air du Righi.*

This song, which formed the last on his programme, was even better than the preceding, and from all sides in the wondering throng were heard sounds of approbation.

He finished. Again he swung his guitar, took off his cap, held it out in front of him, went two or three steps nearer to the windows, and again repeated his stock phrase: "*Messieurs et mesdames, si vous croyez que je gagne quelque chose,*" which he evidently considered to be very shrewd and witty; but in his voice and motions I perceived now a certain irresolution and childish timidity which were especially touching in a person of such diminutive stature.

The elegant public, still picturesquely grouped in the lighted windows and on the balconies, were shining in their rich attire; a few conversed in soberly discreet tones, apparently about the singer who was standing there below them with outstretched hand; others gazed down with attentive curiosity on the little black figure; on one balcony could be heard a young girl's merry, ringing laughter.

In the crowd below the talk and laughter kept growing louder and louder.

The singer for the third time repeated his phrase, but in a still weaker voice, and did not even end the sentence; and again he stretched his hand with his cap, but instantly drew it back. Again, not one of those brilliantly dressed scores of people standing to listen to him threw him a penny.

The crowd laughed heartlessly.

The little singer, so it seemed to me, shrunk more into himself, took his guitar into his other hand, lifted his cap, and said: —

"*Messieurs et mesdames, je vous remercie, et je vous souhais une bonne nuit.*"

Then he put on his hat.

The crowd cackled with laughter and satisfaction. The handsome ladies and gentlemen, calmly exchanging remarks, withdrew gradually from the balconies. On the boulevard the promenading began once more. The street, which had been still during the singing, assumed its wonted liveliness; a few men, however, stood at some distance, and, without approaching the singer, looked at him and laughed.

I heard the little man muttering something between his teeth, as he turned away; and I saw him, apparently growing more and more diminutive, start toward the city with brisk steps. The promenaders, who had been looking at him, followed him at some distance, still making merry at his expense. ....

My mind was in a whirl; I could not comprehend what it all meant; and still standing in the same place, I gazed abstractedly into the darkness after the little man, who was fast disappearing, as he went with ever increasing swiftness with long strides into the city, followed by the merrymaking promenaders.

I was overmastered by a feeling of pain, of bitterness, and, above all, of shame for the little man, for the crowd, for myself, as if it were I who had asked for money and received none; as if it were I who had been turned to ridicule.

Without looking any longer, feeling my heart oppressed, I also hurried with long strides toward the entrance of the Schweitzerhof. I could not explain the feeling that overmastered me; only there was something like a stone, from which I could not free myself, weighing down my soul and oppressing me.

At the stately, well-lighted entrance I met the Swiss, who politely made way for me. An English family was also

at the door. A portly, handsome, tall gentleman, with black side-whiskers, in a black hat, and with a plaid on one arm, while in his hand he carried a costly cane, came out slowly, and full of importance. Leaning on his arm was a lady, who wore a raw silk gown and a bonnet with bright ribbons and the most charming laces. With them was a pretty, fresh-looking young lady, in a graceful Swiss hat, with a feather, *à la mousquetaire ;* from under it escaped long, light yellow curls, softly encircling her fair face. In front of them skipped a buxom girl of ten, with round, white knees which showed from under her thin embroideries. "What a lovely night!" the lady was saying in a sweet, happy voice, as I passed them.

"Oh, yes," growled the Englishman, lazily ; and it was evident that he found it so enjoyable to be alive in the world, that it was too much trouble even to speak.

And it seemed as if all of them alike found it so comfortable and easy, so light and free, to be alive in the world, their faces and motions expressed such perfect indifference to the lives of every one else, and such absolute confidence, that it was to them that the Swiss made way, and bowed so profoundly, and that when they returned they would find clean, comfortable beds and rooms, and that all this was bound to be, and was their indefeasible right, that I could not help contrasting them with the wandering minstrel, who, weary, perhaps hungry, full of shame, was retreating before the laughing crowd. And then, suddenly, I comprehended what it was that oppressed my heart with such a load of heaviness, and I felt an indescribable anger against these people.

Twice I walked up and down past the Englishman, and each time, without turning out for him, my elbow punched him, which gave me a feeling of indescribable satisfaction ; and then, darting down the steps, I hastened through the darkness in the direction taken by the little man on his way to the city.

Overtaking three men, walking together, I asked them where the singer was ; they laughed, and pointed

straight ahead. There he was, walking alone with brisk steps; no one was with him; all the time, as it seemed to me, he was indulging in bitter monologue.

I caught up with him, and proposed to him to go somewhere with me and drink a bottle of wine. He kept on with his rapid walk, and looked at me indignantly; but when it dawned on him what I meant, he halted.

"Well, I will not refuse, if you are so kind," said he; "here is a little *café*, we can go in there. It's very ordinary," he added, pointing to a drinking-saloon that was still open.

His expression "very ordinary" involuntarily suggested to my mind the idea of not going to a very ordinary *café*, but to go to the Schweitzerhof, where those who had been listening to him were. Notwithstanding the fact that several times he showed a sort of timid disquietude at the idea of going to the Schweitzerhof, declaring that it was too fashionable for him there, still I insisted on carrying out my purpose; and he, already pretending that he was not in the least abashed, and gayly swinging his guitar, went back with me across the quay.

A few loiterers who had happened along as I was talking with the minstrel, and had stopped to hear what I had to say, now, after arguing among themselves, followed us to the very entrance of the hotel, evidently expecting from the Tyrolese some further demonstration.

I ordered a bottle of wine of a waiter whom I met in the hall. The waiter smiled and looked at us, and went by without answering. The head waiter, to whom I addressed myself with the same order, listened to me and, measuring the minstrel's modest little figure from head to foot, sternly ordered the waiter to take us to the room at the left.

The room at the left was a bar-room for simple people. In the corner of this room a hunchbacked maid was washing dishes. The whole furniture consisted of bare wooden tables and benches.

The waiter who came to serve us looked at us with a supercilious smile, thrust his hands in his pockets, and exchanged some remarks with the humpbacked dish-washer. He evidently tried to give us to understand that he felt himself immeasurably higher than the minstrel, both in dignity and social position, so that he considered it not only an indignity, but actually ridiculous, that he was called on to serve us.

"Do you wish *vin ordinaire?*" he asked, with a knowing look, winking toward my companion and switching his napkin from one hand to the other.

"Champagne, and your very best," said I, endeavoring to assume my haughtiest and most imposing appearance.

But neither my champagne, nor my endeavor to look haughty and imposing, had the least effect on the servant; he smiled incredulously, loitered a moment or two gazing at us, took time enough to glance at his gold watch, and with leisurely steps, as if going out for a walk, left the room.

Soon he returned with the wine, bringing two other waiters with him. These two sat down near the dish-washer, and gazed at us with amused attention and a bland smile, just as parents gaze at their children when they are gently playing. Only the humpbacked dish-washer, it seemed to me, did not look at us scornfully but sympathetically.

Though it was trying and awkward to lunch with the minstrel, and to play the entertainer, under the fire of all these waiters' eyes, I tried to do my duty with as little constraint as possible. In the lighted room I could see him better. He was a small but symmetrically built and muscular man, though almost a dwarf in stature; he had bristly black hair, teary big black eyes, bushy eyebrows, and a thoroughly pleasant, attractively shaped mouth. He had little side-whiskers, his hair was short, his attire was very simple and mean. He was not over-clean, was ragged and sunburnt, and in general had the look of a laboring-man. He was far more like a poor tradesman than an artist.

Only in his ever humid and brilliant eyes, and in his

firm mouth, was there any sign of originality or genius. By his face it might be conjectured that his age was between twenty-five and forty; in reality, he was thirty-seven.

Here is what he related to me, with good-natured readiness and evident sincerity, of his life. He was a native of Aargau. In early childhood he had lost father and mother; other relatives he had none. He had never owned any property. He had been apprenticed to a carpenter; but twenty-two years previously one of his arms had been attacked by caries, which had prevented him from ever working again.

From childhood he had been fond of singing, and he began to be a singer. Occasionally strangers had given him money. With this he had learned his profession, bought his guitar, and now for eighteen years he had been wandering about through Switzerland and Italy, singing before hotels. His whole luggage consisted of his guitar, and a little purse in which, at the present time, there was only a franc and a half. That would have to suffice for supper and lodgings this night.

Every year now for eighteen years he had made the round of the best and most popular resorts of Switzerland, — Zurich, Lucerne, Interlaken, Chamounix, etc.; by the way of the St. Bernard he would go down into Italy, and return over the St. Gotthard, or through Savoy. Just at present it was rather hard for him to walk, as he had caught a cold, causing him to suffer from some trouble in his legs, — he called it *Gliederzucht*, or rheumatism, — which grew more severe from year to year; and, moreover, his voice and eyes had grown weaker. Nevertheless, he was on his way to Interlaken, Aix-les-Bains, and thence over the little St. Bernard to Italy, which he was very fond of. It was evident that on the whole he was well content with his life.

When I asked him why he returned home, if he had any relatives there, or a house and land, his mouth parted in a gay smile, and he replied, "*Oui, le sucre est bon, il est doux pour les enfants!*" and he winked at the servants.

I did not catch his meaning, but the group of servants burst out laughing.

"No, I have nothing of the sort, but still I should always want to go back," he explained to me. "I go home because there is always a something that draws one to one's native place."

And once more he repeated with a shrewd, self-satisfied smile, his phrase, "*Oui, le sucre est bon*," and then laughed good-naturedly.

The servants were very much amused, and laughed heartily; only the hunchbacked dish-washer looked earnestly from her big kindly eyes at the little man, and picked up his cap for him, when, as we talked, he once knocked it off the bench. I have noticed that wandering minstrels, acrobats, even jugglers, delight in calling themselves artists, and several times I hinted to my comrade that he was an artist; but he did not at all accept this designation, but with perfect simplicity looked on his work as a means of existence.

When I asked him if he had not himself written the songs which he sang, he showed great surprise at such a strange question, and replied that the words of whatever he sang were all of old Tyrolese origin.

"But how about that song of the Righi? I think that cannot be very ancient," I suggested.

"Oh, that was composed about fifteen years ago. There was a German in Basle; he was a clever man; it was he who composed it. A splendid song. You see he composed it especially for travelers."

And he began to repeat the words of the Righi song, which he liked so well, translating them into French as he went along.

"*If you wish to go to Righi,*
You will not need shoes to Wegis
(*For you go that far by steamboat*),
But from Wegis take a stout staff,
Also on your arm a maiden;
Drink a glass of wine on starting,
Only do not drink too freely,
For if you desire to drink here,
You must earn the right to, first."

"Oh! a splendid song!" he exclaimed, as he finished.

The servants, evidently, also found the song much to their mind, because they came up closer to us.

"Yes, but who was it composed the music?" I asked.

"Oh, no one at all; you know you must have something new when you are going to sing for strangers."

When the ice was brought, and I had given my comrade a glass of champagne, he seemed somewhat ill at ease, and, glancing at the servants, he turned and twisted on the bench.

We touched our glasses to the health of all artists; he drank half a glass, then he seemed to be collecting his ideas, and knit his brows in deep thought.

"It is long since I have tasted such wine, *je ne vous dis que ça*. In Italy the *vino d'Asti* is excellent, but this is still better. Ah! Italy; it is splendid to be there!" he added.

"Yes, there they know how to appreciate music and artists," said I, trying to bring him round to the evening's mischance before the Schweitzerhof.

"No," he replied. "There, as far as music is concerned, I cannot give anybody satisfaction. The Italians are themselves musicians, — none like them in the world; but I know only Tyrolese songs. They are something of a novelty to them, though."

"Well, you find rather more generous gentlemen there, don't you?" I went on to say, anxious to make him share in my resentment against the guests of the Schweitzerhof. "There it would not be possible to find a big hotel frequented by rich people, where, out of a hundred listening to an artist's singing, not one would give him anything."

My question utterly failed of the effect that I expected. It did not enter his head to be indignant with them; on the contrary, he saw in my remark an implied slur on his talent which had failed of its reward, and he hastened to set himself right before me. "It is not every time that you get anything," he remarked; "sometimes one is n't in good voice, or you are tired;

now to-day I have been walking ten hours, and singing almost all the time. That is hard. And these important aristocrats do not always care to listen to Tyrolese songs."

"But still, how can they help giving?" I insisted. He did not comprehend my remark.

"That 's nothing," he said; "but here the principal thing is, *on est tres serré pour la police*, that 's what 's the trouble. Here, according to these republican laws, you are not allowed to sing; but in Italy you can go wherever you please, no one says a word. Here, if they want to let you, they let you; but if they don't want to, then they can throw you into jail."

"What? That 's incredible!"

"Yes, it is true. If you have been warned once, and are found singing again, they may put you in jail. I was kept there three months once," he said, smiling as if that were one of his pleasantest recollections.

"Oh! that is terrible!" I exclaimed. "What was the reason?"

"That was in consequence of one of the new laws of the republic," he went on to explain, growing animated. "They cannot comprehend here that a poor fellow must earn his living somehow. If I were not a cripple, I would work. But what harm do I do to any one in the world by my singing? What does it mean? The rich can live as they wish, but *un pauvre tiaple* like myself can't live at all. What does it mean by laws of the republic? If that is the way they run, then we don't want a republic. Is n't that so, my dear sir? We don't want a republic, but we want.... we simply want.... we want".... he hesitated a little,.... "we want natural laws."

I filled up his glass.

"You are not drinking," I said.

He took the glass in his hand, and bowed to me.

"I know what you wish," he said, blinking his eyes at me, and threatening me with his finger. "You wish to make me drunk, so as to see what you can get out of me; but no, you shan't have that gratification."

"Why should I make you drunk?" I inquired. "All I wished was to give you a pleasure."

He seemed really sorry that he had offended me by interpreting my insistence so harshly. He grew confused, stood up, and touched my elbow.

"No, no," said he, looking at me with a beseeching expression in his moist eyes. "I was only joking."

And immediately after he made use of some horribly uncultivated slang expression, intended to signify that I was, nevertheless, a fine young man.

"*Je ne vous dis que ça*," he said in conclusion.

In this fashion the minstrel and I continued to drink and converse; and the waiters continued to stare at us unceremoniously, and, as it seemed, to ridicule us.

In spite of the interest which our conversation aroused in me, I could not avoid taking notice of their behavior; and I confess I began to grow more and more angry.

One of the waiters arose, came up to the little man, and, looking at the top of his head, began to smile. I was already full of wrath against the inmates of the hotel, and had not yet had a chance to pour it out on any one; and now I confess I was in the highest degree irritated by this audience of waiters.

The Swiss, not removing his hat, came into the room, and sat down near me, leaning his elbows on the table. This last circumstance, which was so insulting to my dignity or my vainglory, completely enraged me, and gave an outlet for all the wrath which the whole evening long had been boiling within me. Why had he so humbly bowed when he had met me before, and now, because I was sitting with the traveling minstrel, did he come and take his place near me so rudely? I was entirely overmastered by that boiling, angry indignation which I enjoy in myself, which I sometimes endeavor to stimulate when it comes over me, because it has an exhilarating effect on me, and gives me, if only for a short time, a certain extraordinary flexibility, energy, and strength in all my physical and moral faculties.

I leaped to my feet.

"Whom are you laughing at?" I screamed at the waiter; and I felt my face turn pale, and my lips involuntarily set together.

"I am not laughing, I only...." replied the waiter, moving away from me.

"Yes, you are; you are laughing at this gentleman. And what right have you to come, and to take a seat here, when there are guests? Don't you dare to sit down!"

The Swiss, muttering something, got up and turned to the door.

"What right have you to make sport of this gentleman, and to sit down by him, when he is a guest, and you are a waiter? Why didn't you laugh at me this evening at dinner, and come and sit down beside me? Because he is meanly dressed, and sings in the streets? Is that the reason? and because I have better clothes? He is poor, but he is a thousand times better than you are; that I am sure of, because he has never insulted any one, but you have insulted him."

"I didn't mean anything," replied my enemy, the waiter. "Did I disturb him by sitting down?"

The waiter did not understand me, and my German was wasted on him. The rude Swiss was about to take the waiter's part; but I fell upon him so impetuously that the Swiss pretended not to understand me, and waved his hand.

The hunchbacked dish-washer, either because she perceived my wrathful state, and feared a scandal, or possibly because she shared my views, took my part, and, trying to force her way between me and the porter, told him to hold his tongue, saying that I was right, but at the same time urging me to calm myself.

"*Der Herr hat Recht; Sie haben Recht*," she said over and over again. The minstrel's face presented a most pitiable, terrified expression; and evidently he did not understand why I was angry, and what I wanted; and he urged me to let him go away as soon as possible.

But the eloquence of wrath burned within me more and more. I understood it all, — the throng that had made merry at his expense, and his auditors who had not given him anything; and not for all the world would I have held my peace.

I believe that, if the waiters and the Swiss had not been so submissive, I should have taken delight in having a brush with them, or striking the defenseless English girl on the head with a stick. If at that moment I had been at Sevastopol, I should have taken delight in devoting myself to slaughtering and killing in the English trench.

"And why did you take this gentleman and me into this room, and not into the other? What?" I thundered at the Swiss, seizing him by the arm so that he could not escape from me. "What right had you to judge by his appearance that this gentleman must be served in this room, and not in that? Have not all guests who pay equal rights in hotels? Not only in a republic, but in all the world! Your scurvy republic! .... Equality, indeed! You would not dare to take an Englishman into this room, not even those Englishmen who have heard this gentleman free of cost; that is, who have stolen from him, each one of them, the few centimes which ought to have been given to him. How did you dare to take us to this room?"

"That room is closed," said the porter.

"No," I cried, "that is n't true; it is n't closed."

"Then you know best."

"I know .... I know that you are lying."

The Swiss turned his back on me.

"Eh! What is to be said?" he muttered.

"What is to be said?" I cried. "Now conduct us instantly into that room!"

In spite of the dish-washer's warning, and the entreaties of the minstrel, who would have preferred to go home, I insisted on seeing the head waiter, and went with my guest into the big dining-room. The head waiter, hearing my angry voice, and seeing my menacing face, avoided a quarrel, and, with contemptuous

servility, said that I might go wherever I pleased. I could not prove to the Swiss that he had lied, because he had hastened out of sight before I went into the hall.

The dining-room was, in fact, open and lighted; and at one of the tables sat an Englishman and a lady, eating their supper. Although we were shown to a special table, I took the dirty minstrel to the very one where the Englishman was, and bade the waiter bring to us there the unfinished bottle.

The two guests at first looked with surprised, then with angry, eyes at the little man, who, more dead than alive, was sitting near me. They talked together in a low tone; then the lady pushed back her plate, her silk dress rustled, and both of them left the room. Through the glass doors I saw the Englishman saying something in an angry voice to the waiter, and pointing with his hand in our direction. The waiter put his head through the door, and looked at us. I waited with pleasurable anticipation for some one to come and order us out, for then I could have found a full outlet for all my indignation. But fortunately, though at the time I felt injured, we were left in peace. The minstrel, who before had fought shy of the wine, now eagerly drank all that was left in the bottle, so that he might make his escape as quickly as possible.

He, however, expressed his gratitude with deep feeling, as it seemed to me, for his entertainment. His teary eyes grew still more humid and brilliant, and he made use of a most strange and complicated phrase of gratitude. But still very pleasant to me was the sentence in which he said that if everybody treated artists as I had been doing, it would be very good, and ended by wishing me all manner of happiness. We went out into the hall together. There stood the servants, and my enemy the Swiss apparently airing his grievances against me before them. All of them, I thought, looked at me as if I were a man who had lost his wits. I treated the little man exactly like an equal, before all that audience of servants; and then, with all the respect that I was able to express in my behavior, I took off my

hat, and pressed his hand with its dry and hardened fingers.

The servants pretended not to pay the slightest attention to me. Only one of them indulged in a sarcastic laugh.

As soon as the minstrel had bowed himself out, and disappeared in the darkness, I went up-stairs to my room, intending to sleep off all these impressions and the foolish, childish anger which had come upon me so unexpectedly. But, finding that I was too much excited to sleep, I once more went down into the street with the intention of walking until I should have recovered my equanimity, and, I must confess, with the secret hope that I might accidentally come across the porter or the waiter or the Englishman, and show them all their rudeness, and, most of all, their unfairness. But beyond the Swiss, who when he saw me turned his back, I met no one; and I began to promenade in absolute solitude back and forth along the quay.

"This is an example of the strange fate of poetry," said I to myself, having grown a little calmer. "All love it, all are in search of it; it is the only thing in life that men love and seek, and yet no one recognizes its power, no one prizes this best treasure of the world, and those who give it to men are not rewarded. Ask any one you please, ask all these guests of the Schweitzerhof, what is the most precious treasure in the world, and all, or ninety-nine out of a hundred, putting on a sardonic expression, will say that the best thing in the world is money.

"'Maybe, though, this does not please you, or coincide with your elevated ideas,' it will be urged; 'but what is to be done if human life is so constituted that money alone is capable of giving a man happiness? I cannot force my mind not to see the world as it is,' it will be added, 'that is, to see the truth.'

"Pitiable is your intellect, pitiable the happiness which you desire! And you yourselves, unhappy creatures, not knowing what you desire, ... why have you all left your fatherland, your relatives, your money-making

trades and occupations, and come to this little Swiss city of Lucerne? Why did you all this evening gather on the balconies, and in respectful silence listen to the little beggar's song? And if he had been willing to sing longer, you would have been silent and listened longer. What! could money, even millions of it, have driven you all from your country, and brought you all together in this little nook of Lucerne? Could money have gathered you all on the balconies to stand for half an hour silent and motionless? No! One thing compels you to do it, and will forever have a stronger influence than all the other impulses of life: the longing for poetry which you know, which you do not realize, but feel, always will feel as long as you have any human sensibilities. The word 'poetry' is a mockery to you; you make use of it as a sort of ridiculous reproach; you regard the love for poetry as something meet for children and silly girls, and you make sport of them for it. For yourselves you must have something more definite.

"But children look upon life in a healthy way; they recognize and love what man ought to love, and what gives happiness. But life has so deceived and perverted you, that you ridicule the only thing that you really love, and you seek for what you hate and for what gives you unhappiness.

"You are so perverted that you did not perceive what obligations you were under to the poor Tyrolese who rendered you a pure delight; but at the same time you feel needlessly obliged to humiliate yourselves before some lord, which gives you neither pleasure nor profit, but rather causes you to sacrifice your comfort and convenience. What absurdity! what incomprehensible lack of reason!

"But it was not this that made the most powerful impression on me this evening. This blindness to all that gives happiness, this unconsciousness of poetic enjoyment, I can almost comprehend, or at least I have become wonted to it, since I have almost everywhere met with it in the course of my life; the harsh, unconscious churlishness of the crowd was no novelty to me; whatever

those who argue in favor of popular sentiment may say, the throng is a conglomeration of very possibly good people, but of people who touch each other only on their coarse animal sides, and express only the weakness and harshness of human nature. But how was it that you, children of a free, humane people, you Christians, you simply as human beings, repaid with coldness and ridicule the poor beggar who gave you a pure enjoyment? But no, in your country there are asylums for beggars. There are no beggars, there must be none; and there must be no feelings of sympathy, since that would be a confession that beggary existed.

"But he labored, he gave you enjoyment, he besought you to give him something of your superfluity in payment for his labor of which you took advantage. But you looked on him with a cool smile as on one of the curiosities in your lofty brilliant palaces; and though there were a hundred of you, favored with happiness and wealth, not one man or one woman among you gave him a *sou.* Abashed he went away from you, and the thoughtless throng, laughing, followed and ridiculed not you, but him, because you were cold, harsh, and dishonorable; because you robbed him in receiving the entertainment which he gave you; for this you jeered *him.*

"'*On the* 19*th of July,* 1857, *in Lucerne, before the Schweitzerhof Hotel, in which were lodging very opulent people, a wandering beggar minstrel sang for half an hour his songs, and played his guitar. About a hundred people listened to him. The minstrel thrice asked all to give him something. No one person gave him a thing, and many made sport of him.*'

"This is not an invention, but an actual fact, as those who desire can find out for themselves by consulting the papers for the list of those who were at the Schweitzerhof on the 19th of July.

"This is an event which the historians of our time ought to describe in letters of inextinguishable flame. This event is more significant and more serious, and fraught with far deeper meaning, than the facts that are printed in newspapers and histories. That the English

have killed several thousand Chinese because the Chinese would not sell them anything for money while their land is overflowing with ringing coins; that the French have killed several thousand Kabyles because the wheat grows well in Africa, and because constant war is essential for the drill of an army; that the Turkish ambassador in Naples must not be a Jew; and that the Emperor Napoleon walks about in Plombières, and gives his people the express assurance that he rules only in direct accordance with the will of the people, — all these are words which darken or reveal something long known. But the episode that took place in Lucerne on the 19th of July seems to me something entirely novel and strange, and it is connected not with the everlastingly ugly side of human nature, but with a well-known epoch in the development of society. This fact is not for the history of human activities, but for the history of progress and civilization.

"Why is it that this inhuman fact, impossible in any German, French, or Italian country, is quite possible here where civilization, freedom, and equality are carried to the highest degree of development, where there are gathered together the most civilized travelers from the most civilized nations? Why is it that these cultivated human beings, generally capable of every honorable human action, had no hearty, human feeling for one good deed? Why is it that these people who, in their palaces, their meetings, and their societies, labor warmly for the condition of the celibate Chinese in India, about the spread of Christianity and culture in Africa, about the formation of societies for attaining all perfection, — why is it that they should not find in their souls the simple, primitive feeling of human sympathy? Has such a feeling entirely disappeared, and has its place been taken by vainglory, ambition, and cupidity, governing these men in their palaces, meetings, and societies? Has the spreading of that reasonable, egotistical association of people, which we call civilization, destroyed and rendered nugatory the desire for instinctive and loving association? And is this that boasted equality

for which so much innocent blood has been shed, and so many crimes have been perpetrated? Is it possible that nations, like children, can be made happy by the mere sound of the word 'equality'?

"Equality before the law? Does the whole life of a people revolve within the sphere of law? Only the thousandth part of it is subject to the law; the rest lies outside of it, in the sphere of the customs and intuitions of society.

"But in society the lackey is better dressed than the minstrel, and insults him with impunity. I am better dressed than the lackey, and insult him with impunity. The Swiss considers me higher, but the minstrel lower, than himself; when I made the minstrel my companion, he felt that he was on an equality with us both, and behaved rudely. I was impudent to the Swiss, and the Swiss acknowledged that he was inferior to me. The waiter was impudent to the minstrel, and the minstrel accepted the fact that he was inferior to the waiter.

"And is that government free, even though men seriously call it free, where a single citizen can be thrown into prison, because, without harming any one, without interfering with any one, he does the only thing he can to prevent himself from dying of starvation?

"A wretched, pitiable creature is man with his craving for positive solutions, thrown into this everlastingly tossing, limitless ocean of *good* and *evil*, of facts, of combinations and contradictions. For centuries men have been struggling and laboring to put the *good* on one side, the *evil* on the other. Centuries will pass, and no matter how much the unprejudiced mind may strive to decide where the balance lies between the *good* and the *evil*, the scales will refuse to tip the beam, and there will always be equal quantities of the *good* and the *evil* on each scale.

"If only man would learn to form judgments, and not indulge in rash and arbitrary thoughts, and not to make reply to questions that are propounded merely to remain forever unanswered! If only he would learn that every thought is both a lie and a truth! — a lie from the one

sidedness and inability of man to recognize all truth; and true because it expresses one side of mortal endeavor. There are divisions in this everlastingly tumultuous, endless, endlessly confused chaos of the *good* and the *evil*. They have drawn imaginary lines over this ocean, and they contend that the ocean is really thus divided.

"But are there not millions of other possible subdivisions from absolutely different standpoints, in other planes? Certainly these novel subdivisions will be made in centuries to come, just as millions of different ones have been made in centuries past.

"Civilization is *good*, barbarism is *evil;* freedom, *good*, slavery, *evil*. Now this imaginary knowledge annihilates the instinctive, beatific, primitive craving for the *good* which is in human nature. And who will explain to me what is freedom, what is despotism, what is civilization, what is barbarism?

"Where are the boundaries that separate them? And whose soul possesses so absolute a standard of good and evil as to measure these fleeting, complicated facts? Whose intellect is so great as to comprehend and weigh all the facts in the irretrievable past? And who can find any circumstance in which *good* and *evil* do not exist together? And because I know that I see more of one than of the other, is it not because my standpoint is wrong? And who has the ability to separate himself so absolutely from life, even for a moment, as to look upon it independently from above?

"One, only one infallible Guide we have, — the universal Spirit which penetrates all collectively and as units, which has endowed each of us with the craving for the right; the Spirit which commands the tree to grow toward the sun, which commands the flower in autumn-tide to scatter its seed, and which commands each one of us unconsciously to draw closer together. And this one unerring, inspiring voice rings out louder than the noisy, hasty development of civilization.

"Who is the greater man, and who the greater barbarian, — that lord, who, seeing the minstrel's well-worn clothes, angrily left the table, who gave him not the

millionth part of his possessions in payment of his labor, and now lazily sitting in his brilliant, comfortable room, calmly expresses his opinion about the events that are happening in China, and justifies the massacres that have been done there; or the little minstrel, who, risking imprisonment, with a franc in his pocket, and doing no harm to any one, has been going about for a score of years, up hill and down dale, rejoicing men's hearts with his songs, though they have jeered at him, and almost cast him out of the pale of humanity; and who, in weariness and cold and shame, has gone off to sleep, no one knows where, on his filthy straw?"

At this moment, from the city, through the dead silence of the night, far, far away, I caught the sound of the little man's guitar and his voice.

"No," something involuntarily said to me, "you have no right to commiserate the little man, or to blame the lord for his well-being. Who can weigh the inner happiness which is found in the soul of each of these men? There he stands somewhere in the muddy road, and gazes at the brilliant moonlit sky, and gayly sings amid the smiling, fragrant night; in his soul there is no reproach, no anger, no regret. And who knows what is transpiring now in the hearts of all these men within those opulent, brilliant rooms? Who knows if they all have as much unencumbered, sweet delight in life, and as much satisfaction with the world, as dwells in the soul of that little man?

"Endless are the mercy and wisdom of Him who has permitted and formed all these contradictions. Only to thee, miserable little worm of the dust, audaciously, lawlessly attempting to fathom His laws, His designs, — only to thee do they seem like contradictions.

"Full of love He looks down from His bright, immeasurable height, and rejoices in the endless harmony in which you all move in endless contradictions. In thy pride thou hast thought thyself able to separate thyself from the laws of the universe. No, thou also, with thy petty, ridiculous anger against the waiters, — thou also hast disturbed the harmonious craving for the eternal and the infinite." ....

RECOLLECTIONS OF A BILLIARD-MARKER

A STORY

WELL, it happened about three o'clock. The gentlemen were playing. There was the tall visitor, as our men called him. The prince was there, — the two are always together. The mustached barin was there; also the little hussar, Oliver, who was an actor; there was the Polish *pan*.[1] It was a pretty good crowd.

The tall visitor and the prince were playing together. Now, here I was walking up and down around the billiard-table with my stick, keeping tally, — ten and forty-seven, twelve and forty-seven.

Everybody knows it's our business to score. You don't get a chance to get a bite of anything, and you don't get to bed till two o'clock o' nights, but you're always being screamed at to bring the balls.

I was keeping tally; and I look, and see a new barin comes in at the door. He gazed and gazed, and then sat down on the divan. Very good!

"Now, who can that be?" thinks I to myself. "He must be somebody."

His dress was neat, — neat as a pin, — checkered tricot pants, stylish little short coat, plush vest, and gold chain and all sorts of trinkets dangling from it.

He was dressed neat; but there was something about the man neater still; slim, tall, his hair brushed forward in style, and his face fair and ruddy, — well, in a word, a fine young fellow.

[1] Polish name for lord or gentleman.

You must know our business brings us into contact with all sorts of people. And there 's many that ain't of much consequence, and there 's a good deal of poor trash. So, though you 're only a scorer, you get used to telling folks; that is, in a certain way you learn a thing or two.

I looked at the barin. I see him sit down, modest and quiet, not knowing anybody; and the clothes on him are so brand-new that, thinks I, "Either he 's a foreigner, — an Englishman maybe, — or some count just come. And though he 's so young, he has an air of some distinction."

Oliver sat down next him, so he moved along a little.

They began a game. The tall man lost. He shouts to me. Says he, "You 're always cheating. You don't count straight. Why don't you pay attention?"

He scolded away, then threw down his cue, and went out. Now, just look here! Evenings, he and the prince plays for fifty silver rubles a game; and here he only lost a bottle of Makon wine, and got mad. That 's the kind of a character he is.

Another time he and the prince plays till two o'clock. They don't bank down any cash; and so I know neither of them 's got any cash, but they are simply playing a bluff game.

"I 'll go you twenty-five rubles," says he.

"All right."

Just yawning, and not even stopping to place the ball, — you see, he was not made of stone, — now just notice what he said. "We are playing for money," says he, "and not for chips."

But this man puzzled me worse than all the rest. Well, then, when the big man left, the prince says to the stranger, "Would n't you like," says he, "to play a game with me?"

"With pleasure," says he.

He sat there, and looked rather foolish, indeed he did. He may have been courageous in reality; but, at all events, he got up, went over to the billiard-table, and

did not seem flustered as yet. But whether he was flustered or not, you could n't help seeing that he was not quite at his ease.

Either his clothes were a little too new, or he was embarrassed because everybody was looking at him; at any rate, he seemed to have no energy. He sort of sidled up to the table, caught his pocket on the edge, began to chalk his cue, dropped his chalk.

Whenever he hit the ball, he always glanced around, and reddened. Not so the prince. He was used to it; he chalked and chalked his hand, tucked up his sleeve; he goes and sits down when he pockets the ball, even though he is such a little man.

They played two or three games; then I notice the prince puts up the cue, and says, "Would you mind telling me your name?"

"Nekhliudof," says he.

Says the prince, "Was your father commander in the corps of cadets?"

"Yes," says the other.

Then they began to talk in French, and I could not understand them. I suppose they were talking about family affairs.

"*Au revoir*," says the prince. "I am very glad to have made your acquaintance."

He washed his hands, and went to get a lunch; but the other stood by the billiard-table with his cue, and was knocking the balls about.

It 's our business, you know, when a new man comes along, to be rather sharp; it 's the best way. I took the balls, and went to put them up. He reddened, and says, "Can't I play any longer?"

"Certainly you can," says I. "That 's what billiards is for." But I don't pay any attention to him. I straighten the cues.

"Will you play with me?"

"Certainly, sir," says I.

I place the balls.

"Shall we play for odds?"

"What do you mean, —'play for odds'?"

"Well," says I, "you give me a half-ruble, and I crawl under the table."

Of course, as he had never seen that sort of thing, it seemed strange to him; he laughed.

"Go ahead," says he.

"Very well," says I, "only you must give me odds."

"What!" says he, "are you a worse player than I am?"

"Most likely," says I. "We have few players who can be compared with you."

We began to play. He certainly had the idea that he was a crack shot. It was a caution to see him shoot; but the Pole sat there, and kept shouting out every time: —

"Ah, what a chance! ah, what a shot!"

But what a man he was! His ideas were good enough, but he didn't know how to carry them out. Well, as usual I lost the first game, crawled under the table, and grunted.

Thereupon Oliver and the Pole jumped down from their seats, and applauded, thumping with their cues.

"Splendid! Do it again," they cried, "once more."

Well enough to cry "once more," especially for the Pole. That fellow would have been glad enough to crawl under the billiard-table, or even under the Blue bridge, for a half-ruble! Yet he was the first to cry, "Splendid! but you haven't wiped off all the dust yet."

I, Petrushka the marker, was pretty well known to everybody.

Only, of course, I did not care to show my hand yet. I lost my second game.

"It does not become me at all to play with you, sir," says I.

He laughed. Then, as I was playing the third game, he stood forty-nine and I nothing. I laid the cue on the billiard-table, and said, "Barin, shall we play off?"

"What do you mean by playing off?" says he. "How would you have it?"

"You make it three rubles or nothing," says I.

"Why," says he, "have I been playing with you for money?" The fool!

He turned rather red.

Very good. He lost the game. He took out his pocket-book, — quite a new one, evidently just from the English shop, — opened it; I see he wanted to make a little splurge. It was stuffed full of bills, — nothing but hundred-ruble notes.

"No," says he, "there's no small stuff here."

He took three rubles from his purse.

"There," says he, "there's your two rubles; the other pays for the games, and you keep the rest for vodka."

"Thank you, sir, most kindly."

I see that he is a splendid fellow. For such a one I would crawl under anything. For one thing, it's a pity that he won't play for money. For then, thinks I, I should know how to work him for twenty rubles, and maybe I could stretch it out to forty.

As soon as the Pole saw the young barin's money, he says, "Would n't you like to try a little game with me? You play so admirably."

Such sharpers prowl around.

"No," says he, "excuse me; I have not the time."

And he went out.

I don't know who that man was, that Pole. Some one called him *Pan*, and it stuck to him. Every day he used to sit in the billiard-room, and always look on. He was no longer allowed to take a hand in any game whatever; but he always sat by himself, and got out his pipe, and smoked. But then he could play well.

Very good. Nekhliudof came a second time, a third time; he began to come frequently. He would come morning and evening. He learned to play French carom and pyramid pool, — everything, in fact. He became less bashful, got acquainted with everybody, and played tolerably well. Of course, being a young man of a good family, with money, everybody liked him. The only exception was the "tall visitor"; he quarreled with him.

And the whole thing grew out of a trifle.

They were playing pool, — the prince, the "tall visitor," Nekhliudof, Oliver, and some one else. Nekhliudof was standing near the stove talking with some one. When it came the big man's turn to play, it happened that his ball was just opposite the stove. There was very little space there, and he liked to have elbow-room.

Now, either he did n't see Nekhliudof, or he did it on purpose; but, as he was flourishing his cue, he hit Nekhliudof in the chest, a tremendous rap. It actually made him groan. What then? He did not think of apologizing, he was so boorish. He even went farther: he did n't look at him; he walks off grumbling: —

"Who 's jostling me there? It made me miss my shot. Why can't we have some room?"

Then the other went up to him, pale as a sheet, but quite self-possessed, and says so politely: —

"You ought first, sir, to apologize; you struck me," says he.

"Catch me apologizing now! I should have won the game," says he, "but now you have spoiled it for me."

Then the other one says: —

"You ought to apologize."

"Get out of my way! I insist upon it, I won't."

And he turned away to look after his ball.

Nekhliudof went up to him, and took him by the arm.

"You 're a boor," says he, "my dear sir."

Though he was a slender young fellow, almost like a girl, still he was all ready for a quarrel. His eyes flashed fire; he looked as if he could eat him alive. The big guest was a strong, tremendous fellow, no match for Nekhliudof.

"Wha-at!" says he, "you call me a boor?"

Yelling out these words, he raises his hand to strike him.

Then everybody there rushed up, and seized them both by the arms, and separated them.

After much talk, Nekhliudof says: —

"Let him give me satisfaction; he has insulted me."

"Not at all," said the other. "I don't care a whit

about any satisfaction. He 's nothing but a boy, a mere nothing. I 'll pull his ears for him."

"If you are n't willing to give me satisfaction, then you are no gentleman."

And, saying this, he almost cried.

"Well, and you, you are a little boy; nothing you say or do can offend me."

Well, we separated them, — led them off, as the custom is, to different rooms. Nekhliudof and the prince had become friends.

"Go," says the former; "for God's sake make him listen to reason."....

The prince went. The big man says: —

"I 'm not afraid of any one," says he. "I am not going," says he, "to have any explanation with such a baby. I won't do it, and that 's the end of it."

Well, they talked and talked, and then the matter died out, only the "tall visitor" ceased to come to us any more.

As a result of this, — this row, I might call it, — he was regarded as quite the cock of the walk. He was quick to take offense, — I mean Nekhliudof; — as to so many other things, however, he was as unsophisticated as a new-born babe.

I remember once, the prince says to Nekhliudof, "Whom do you keep here?"

"No one," says he.

"What do you mean, — 'no one'!"

"Why should I?" says Nekhliudof.

"How so, — why should you?"

"I have always lived thus. Why should n't I continue to live the same way?"

"You don't say so! It is incredible!"

And saying this, the prince burst into a peal of laughter, and the mustached barin also roared. They could n't get over it.

"What, never?" they asked.

"Never!"

They were dying with laughter. Of course I understood well enough what they were laughing at him for.

I keep my eyes open. "What," thinks I, "will come of it?"

"Come," says the prince, "come with me now."

"No; not for anything," was his answer.

"Now, that is absurd," says the prince. "Come along!"

They went out.

They came back at one o'clock. They sat down to supper; quite a crowd of them were assembled. Some of our very best customers, — Atanof, Prince Razin, Count Shustakh, Mirtsof. And all congratulated Nekhliudof, laughing as they did so. They called me in; I saw that they were pretty jolly.

"Congratulate the barin," they shout.

"What on?" I ask.

How did he call it? His initiation or his enlightenment;[1] I can't remember exactly.

"I have the honor," says I, "to congratulate you."

And he sits there very red in the face, yet he smiles. Did n't they have fun with him, though!

Well and good. They went afterward to the billiard-room, all very gay; and Nekhliudof went up to the billiard-table, leaned on his elbow, and said: —

"It 's amusing to you, gentlemen," says he, "but it 's sad for me. Why," says he, "why did I do it? Prince," says he, "I shall never forgive you or myself as long as I live."

And he actually burst into tears. Evidently he did not know himself what he was saying. The prince went up to him with a smile.

"Don't talk nonsense," says he. "Let 's go home, Anatoli."

"I won't go anywhere," says the other. "Why did I do that?"

And the tears poured down his cheeks. He would not leave the billiard-table, and that was the end of it. That 's what it means for a young and inexperienced man to....

In this way he used often to come to us. Once he

[1] *S posvyashcheniem-li, s prosvyashcheniem-li.*

came with the prince, and the mustached man who was the prince's crony; the gentlemen always called him "Fedotka." He had prominent cheek-bones, and was homely enough, to be sure; but he used to dress neatly and drove in a carriage. Why did the gentlemen like him so well? I really could not tell.

"Fedotka! Fedotka!" they'd call, and ask him to eat and to drink, and they'd spend their money paying up for him; but he was a thoroughgoing beat. If ever he lost, he would be sure not to pay; but if he won, you bet he would n't fail to collect his money. Often, too, he came to grief; yet there he was, walking arm in arm with the prince.

"You are lost without me," he would say to the prince.

"I am, Fedot,"[1] says he; "but not a Fedot of that sort."

And what jokes he used to crack, to be sure! Well, as I said, they had already arrived that time, and one of them says, "Let's have the balls for three-handed pool."

"All right," says the other.

They began to play at three rubles a stake. Nekhliudof and the prince chat about all sorts of things.

"Ah!" says one of them, "you mind only what a neat little ankle she has."

"Oh," says the other, "her ankle is well enough; but what beautiful hair."

Of course they paid no attention to the game, only kept on talking to one another.

As to Fedotka, that fellow was alive to his work; he played his very best, but they did n't do themselves justice at all.

And so he won six rubles from each of them. God knows how many games he had won from the prince, yet I never knew them to pay each other any money; but Nekhliudof took out two greenbacks, and handed them over to him.

"No," says he, "I don't want to take your money.

[1] *Fedot, da nye tot,* an untranslatable play on the word.

Let 's square it: play 'quits or double,'[1] — either double or nothing."

I set the balls. Fedotka began to play the first hand. Nekhliudof seemed to play only for fun; sometimes he would come very near winning a game, yet just fail of it. Says he, "It would be too easy a move, I won't have it so." But Fedotka did not forget what he was up to. Carelessly he proceeded with the game, and thus, as if it were unexpectedly, won.

"Let us play double stakes once more," says he.

"All right," says Nekhliudof.

Once more Fedotka won the game.

"Well," says he, "it began with a mere trifle. I don't wish to win much from you. Shall we make it once more or nothing?"

"Yes."

Say what you may, but fifty rubles is a pretty sum, and Nekhliudof himself began to propose, "Let us make it double or quit." So they played and played.

It kept growing worse and worse for Nekhliudof. Two hundred and eighty rubles were written up against him. As to Fedotka, he had his own method; he would lose a simple game, but when the stake was doubled, he would win sure.

But the prince sits by and looks on. He sees that the matter is growing serious.

"Enough!"[2] says he, "hold on."

My! they keep increasing the stake.

At last it went so far that Nekhliudof was in for more than five hundred rubles. Fedotka laid down his cue, and said: —

"Are n't you satisfied for to-day? I 'm tired," says he.

Yet I knew he was ready to play till dawn of day, provided there was money to be won. Stratagem, of course. And the other was all the more anxious to go on. "Come on! Come on!"

"No, — by God, I 'm tired. Come," says Fedot; "let 's go up-stairs; there you shall have your *revanche*."

[1] *Kitudubl* = Fr. *quitte ou double.* [2] *ase* = *assez.*

Up-stairs with us meant the place where the gentlemen used to play cards.

From that very day, Fedotka wound his net round him so that he began to come every day. He would play one or two games of billiards, and then proceed up-stairs, — every day up-stairs.

What they used to do there, God only knows; but it is a fact that from that time he began to be an entirely different kind of man, and seemed hand in glove with Fedotka. Formerly he used to be stylish, neat in his dress, with his hair slightly curled even; but now it would be only in the morning that he would be anything like himself; but as soon as he had paid his visit up-stairs, he would not be at all like himself.

Once he came down from up-stairs with the prince, pale, his lips trembling, and talking excitedly.

"I cannot permit such a one as *he* is," says he, "to say that I am not...." How did he express himself? I cannot recollect, something like "not defined[1] enough," or what, — "and that he won't play with me any more. I tell you I have paid him ten thousand, and I should think that he might be a little more considerate, before others, at least."

"Oh, bother!" says the prince, "is it worth while to lose one's temper with Fedotka?"

"No," says the other, "I will not let it go so."

"Why, old fellow, how can you think of such a thing as lowering yourself to have a row with Fedotka?"

"That is all very well; but there were strangers there, mind you."

"Well, what of that?" says the prince; "strangers? Well, if you wish, I will go and make him ask your pardon."

"No," says the other.

And then they began to chatter in French, and I could not understand what it was they were talking about.

And what would you think of it? That very evening he and Fedotka ate supper together, and they became friends again.

[1] *Velikaten* for *delikaten*.

Well and good. At other times again he would come alone.

"Well," he would say, "do I play well?"

It 's our business, you know, to try to make everybody contented, and so I would say, "Yes, indeed;" and yet how could it be called good play, when he would poke about with his cue without any sense whatever.

And from that very evening when he took in with Fedotka, he began to play for money all the time. Formerly he did n't care to play for stakes, even for a dinner or for champagne. Sometimes the prince would say: —

"Let 's play for a bottle of champagne."

"No," he would say. "Let us rather have the wine by itself. Hollo, there! bring a bottle!"

And now he began to play for money all the time; he used to spend his entire days in our establishment. He would either play with some one in the billiard-room, or he would go "up-stairs."

Well, thinks I to myself, every one else gets something from him, why don't I get some advantage out of it?

"Well, sir," says I, one day, "it 's a long time since you have had a game with me."

And so we began to play. Well, when I won ten half-rubles of him, I says: —

"Don't you want to make it double or quit, sir?"

He said nothing. Formerly, if you remember, he would call me *durak*, fool, for such a boldness. But now we went to playing "quit or double."

I won eighty rubles of him.

Well, what would you think? Since that first time he used to play with me every day. He would wait till there was no one about, for of course he would have been ashamed to play with a mere marker in presence of others. Once he had got rather warmed up by the play (he already owed me sixty rubles), and so he says: —

"Do you want to stake all you have won?"

"All right," says I.

I won. "One hundred and twenty to one hundred and twenty?"

"All right," says I.

Again I won. "Two hundred and forty against two hundred and forty?"

"Isn't that too much?" I ask.

He made no reply. We played the game. Once more it was mine. "Four hundred and eighty against four hundred and eighty?"

I says, "Well, sir, I don't want to wrong you. Let us make it a hundred rubles that you owe me, and call it square."

You ought to have heard how he yelled at this, and yet he was not a proud man at all.

"Either play, or don't play!" says he.

Well, I see there 's nothing to be done. "Three hundred and eighty, then, if you please," says I.

I really wanted to lose. I allowed him forty points in advance. He stood fifty-two to my thirty-six. He began to cut the yellow one, and missed eighteen points; and I was standing just at the turning-point. I made a stroke so as to knock the ball off of the billiard-table. No — so luck would have it. Do what I might, he even missed the doublet. I had won again.

"Listen," says he. "Piotr," — he did not call me *Petrushka* then, — "I can't pay you the whole on the spot. In a couple of months I can pay three thousand even, if it were necessary."

And there he stood just as red, and his voice kind of trembled.

"Very good, sir," says I.

With this he laid down the cue. Then he began to walk up and down, up and down, the sweat running down his face.

"Piotr," says he, "let 's try it again, double or quit."

And he almost burst into tears.

"What, sir, what! would you play against such luck?"

"Oh, let us play, I beg of you."

And he brought the cue, and put it in my hand.

I took the cue, and I threw the balls on the table so that they bounced over on to the floor; I could not help showing off a little, naturally. I say, "All right, sir."

But he was in such a hurry that he went and picked up the balls himself, and I thinks to myself, "Anyway, I 'll never be able to get the seven hundred rubles from him, so I can lose them to him all the same."

I began to play carelessly on purpose. But no — he won't have it so.

"Why," says he, "you are playing badly on purpose."

But his hands trembled, and when the ball went toward a pocket, his fingers would spread out and his mouth would screw up to one side, as if he could by any means force the ball into the pocket. Even I could n't stand it, and I say: —

"That won't do any good, sir."

Very well. As he won this game, I says: —

"This will make it one hundred and eighty rubles you owe me, and fifty games; and now I must go and get my supper."

So I put up my cue, and went off.

I went and sat down all by myself, at a small table opposite the door; and I look in and see, and wonder what he will do. Well, what would you think? He began to walk up and down, up and down, probably thinking that no one 's looking at him; and then he would give a pull at his hair, and then walk up and down again, and keep muttering to himself; and then he would pull his hair again.

After that he was n't seen for a week. Once he came into the dining-room as gloomy as could be, but he did n't enter the billiard-room.

The prince caught sight of him.

"Come," says he, "let 's have a game."

"No," says the other, "I am not going to play any more."

"Nonsense! come along."

"No," says he, "I won't come, I tell you. For you it's all one whether I go or not, yet for me it's no good to come here."

And so he did not come for ten days more. And then, it being the holidays, he came dressed up in a dress suit: he'd evidently been into company. And he was here all day long; he kept playing, and he came the next day, and the third. ....

And it began to go in the old style, and I thought it would be fine to have another trial with him.

"No," says he, "I'm not going to play with you; and as to the one hundred and eighty rubles that I owe you, if you'll come at the end of a month, you shall have it."

Very good. So I went to him at the end of a month.

"By God," says he, "I can't give it to you; but come back on Thursday."

Well, I went on Thursday. I found that he had a splendid suite of apartments.

"Well," says I, "is he at home?"

"He hasn't got up yet," I was told.

"Very good, I will wait."

For a body-servant he had one of his own serfs, such a gray-haired old man! That servant was perfectly single-minded, he didn't know anything about beating about the bush. So we got into conversation.

"Well," says he, "what is the use of our living here, master and I? He's squandered all his property, and it's mighty little honor or good that we get out of this Petersburg of yours. When he started from the country, he thought it would be as it was with the last barin (the kingdom of heaven be his!), I shall go about with princes and counts and generals; he thought to himself, 'I'll find a countess for a sweetheart, and she'll have a big dowry, and we'll live on a big scale.' But it's quite a different thing from what he expected; here we are, running about from one tavern to another as bad off as we could be! The Princess Rtishcheva, you know, is his own aunt, and Prince Borotintsef is his godfather. What do you think? He went to see them only once.

that was at Christmas time; he never shows his nose there. Yes, and even their people laugh about it to me. 'Why,' says they, 'your barin is not a bit like his father!' And once I take it upon myself to say to him: —

"'Why would n't you go, sir, and visit your aunt? They are feeling bad because you have n't been for so long.'

"'It 's stupid there, Demyanitch,' says he. Just to think, he found his only amusement here in the saloon! If he only would enter the service! yet, no; he has got entangled with cards and all the rest of it. When men get going that way, there 's no good in anything; nothing comes to any good..... *E-ekh!* we are going to the dogs, and no mistake..... The late mistress (the kingdom of heaven be hers!) left us a rich inheritance: no less than a thousand souls, and about three hundred thousand rubles worth of timber lands. He has mortgaged it all, sold the timber, let the estate go to rack and ruin, and still no money on hand. When the master is away, of course, the overseer is more than the master. What does he care? He only cares to stuff his own pockets.

"A few days ago a couple of peasants brought complaints from the whole estate. 'He has wasted all the property,' they say. What do you think? he pondered over the complaints, and gave the peasants ten rubles apiece. Says he, 'I 'll be there very soon. I shall have some money, and I will settle all accounts when I come,' says he.

"But how can he settle accounts when we are getting into debt all the time? Money or no money, yet the winter here has cost eighty thousand rubles, and now there is n't a silver ruble in the house. And allowing to his kind-heartedness. You see, he 's such a simple barin that it would be hard to find his equal; that 's the very reason that he 's going to ruin, — going to ruin, all for nothing."

And the old man almost wept.

Nekhliudof woke up about eleven, and called me in.

"They haven't sent me any money yet," says he. "But it isn't my fault. Shut the door," says he.

I shut the door.

"Here," says he, "take my watch or this diamond pin, and pawn it. They will give you more than one hundred and eighty rubles for it, and when I get my money I will redeem it," says he.

"No matter, sir," says I. "If you don't happen to have any money, it's no consequence; let me have the watch, if you don't mind. I can wait for your convenience."

I can see that the watch is worth more than three hundred.

Very good. I pawned the watch for a hundred rubles, and carried him the ticket.

"You will owe me eighty rubles," says I, "and you had better redeem the watch."

And so it happened that he still owed me eighty rubles.

After that he began to come to us again every day. I don't know how matters stood between him and the prince, but at all events he kept coming with him all the time, or else they would go and play cards up-stairs with Fedotka. And what queer accounts those three men kept between them! this one would lend money to the other, the other to the third, yet who it was that owed the money you never could find out.

And in this way he kept on coming our way for well-nigh two years; only it was to be plainly seen that he was a changed man, such a devil-may-care manner he assumed at times. He even went so far at times as to borrow a ruble of me to pay a hack-driver; and yet he would still play with the prince for a hundred rubles' stake.

He grew gloomy, thin, sallow. As soon as he came he used to order a little glass of absinthe, take a bite of something, and drink some port wine, and then he would grow more lively.

He came one time before dinner; it happened to be carnival time, and he began to play with a hussar.

Says he, "Do you want to play for a stake?"

"Very well," says he. "What shall it be?"

"A bottle of Claude Vougeaux? What do you say?"

"All right."

Very good. The hussar won, and they went off for their dinner. They sat down at table, and then Nekhliudof says, "Simon, a bottle of Claude Vougeaux, and see that you warm it to the proper point."

Simon went out, brought in the dinner, but no wine.

"Well," says he, "where's the wine?"

Simon hurried out, brought in the roast.

"Let us have the wine," says he.

Simon makes no reply.

"What's got into you? Here we've almost finished dinner, and no wine. Who wants to drink with dessert?"

Simon hurried out.

"The landlord," says he, "wants to speak to you."

Nekhliudof turned scarlet. He sprang up from the table.

"What's the need of calling me?"

The landlord is standing at the door.

Says he, "I can't trust you any more, unless you settle my little bill."

"Well, didn't I tell you that I would pay the first of the month?"

"That will be all very well," says the landlord, "but I can't be all the time giving credit, and having no settlement. There are more than ten thousand rubles of debts outstanding now," says he.

"Well, that'll do, *monshoor*, you know that you can trust me! Send the bottle, and I assure you that I will pay you very soon."

And he hurried back.

"What was it? why did they call you out?" asked the hussar.

"Oh, some one wanted to ask me a question."

"Now it would be a good time," says the hussar, "to have a little warm wine to drink."

"Simon, hurry up!"

Simon came back, but still no wine, nothing. Too bad! He left the table, and came to me.

"For God's sake," says he, "Petrushka, let me have six rubles!"

He was pale as a sheet.

"No, sir," says I; "by God, you owe me quite too much now."

"I will give forty rubles for six, in a week's time."

"If only I had it," says I, "I should not think of refusing you, but I have n't."

What do you think! He rushed away, his teeth set, his fist doubled up, and ran down the corridor like one mad, and all at once he gave himself a knock on the forehead.

"O my God!" says he, "what has it come to?"

But he did not return to the dining-room; he jumped into a carriage, and drove away. Did n't we have our laugh over it! The hussar asks:—

"Where is the gentleman who was dining with me?"

"He has gone," said some one.

"Where has he gone? What message did he leave?"

"He did n't leave any; he just took to his carriage, and went off."

"That 's a fine way of entertaining a man!" says he.

Now, thinks I to myself, it 'll be a long time before he comes again after this; that is, on account of this scandal. But no. On the next day he came about evening. He came into the billiard-room. He had a sort of a box in his hand. Took off his overcoat.

"Now, let us have a game," says he.

He looked out from under his eyebrows, rather fierce like.

We played one game.

"That 's enough now," says he; "go and bring me a pen and paper; I must write a letter."

Not thinking anything, not suspecting anything, I bring some paper, and put it on the table in the little room.

"It 's all ready, sir," says I.

"Very good."

He sat down at the table. He kept on writing and writing, and muttering to himself all the time; then he jumps up, and, frowning, says: —

"Look and see if my carriage has come yet."

It was on a Friday, during carnival time, and so there were n't any of the customers on hand; they were all at some ball. I went to see about the carriage, and just as I was going out of the door, "Petrushka! Petrushka!" he shouted, as if something suddenly frightened him.

I turn round. I see he 's pale as a sheet, standing there, and looking at me.

"Did you call me, sir?" says I.

He made no reply.

"What do you want?" says I.

He says nothing.

"Oh, yes!" says he. "Let 's have another game."

Then, says he: —

"Have n't I learned to play pretty well?"

He had just won the game. "Yes," says I.

"All right," says he; "go now, and see about my carriage."

He himself walked up and down the room.

Without thinking anything, I went down to the door. I did n't see any carriage at all. I started to go up again.

Just as I was going up, I heard what sounded like the thud of a billiard-cue. I went into the billiard-room. I noticed a peculiar smell.

I looked around; and there he was, lying on the floor, in a pool of blood, with a pistol beside him. I was that scared that I could not speak a word.

He kept twitching, twitching his leg, and stretched himself a little. Then he sort of snored, and stretched out his full length in such a strange way.

And God knows why such a sin came about, — how it was that it occurred to him to ruin his own soul, — but as to what he left written on this paper, I don't understand it at all.

Truly, you can never account for what is going on in the world.

"God gave me all that a man can desire, — wealth, name, intellect, noble aspirations. I wanted to enjoy myself, and I trod in the mire all that was best in me.

"I have done nothing dishonorable, I am not unfortunate, I have not committed any crime; but I have done worse: I have destroyed my feelings, my intellect, my youth.

"I became entangled in a filthy net, from which I cannot escape, and to which I cannot accustom myself. I feel that I am falling lower and lower every moment, and I cannot stop my fall.

"And what ruined me? Was there in me some strange passion which I might plead as an excuse? No!

".... My recollections are pleasant.

"One fearful moment of forgetfulness, which can never be erased from my mind, led me to come to my senses. I shuddered when I saw what a measureless abyss separated me from what I desired to be, and might have been. In my imagination arose the hopes, the dreams, and the thoughts of my youth.

"Where are those lofty thoughts of life, of eternity, of God, which at times filled my soul with light and strength? Where that aimless power of love which kindled my heart with its comforting warmth?

".... But how good and happy I might have been, had I trodden that path which, at the very entrance of life, was pointed out to me by my fresh mind and true feelings! More than once did I try to go from the ruts in which my life ran, into that sacred path.

"I said to myself, Now I will use my whole strength of will; and yet I could not do it. When I happened

to be alone, I felt awkward and timid. When I was with others, I no longer heard the inward voice; and I fell all the time lower and lower.

"At last I came to a terrible conviction that it was impossible for me to lift myself from this low plane. I ceased to think about it, and I wished to forget all; but hopeless repentance worried me still more and more. Then, for the first time, the thought of suicide occurred to me.

"I once thought that the nearness of death would rouse my soul. I was mistaken. In a quarter of an hour I shall be no more, yet my view has not in the least changed. I see with the same eyes, I hear with the same ears, I think the same thoughts; there is the same strange incoherence, unsteadiness, and lightness in my thoughts."

ALBERT

A STORY

(1857)

CHAPTER I

FIVE rich young men went at three o'clock in the morning to a ball in Petersburg to have a good time.

Much champagne was drunk; a majority of the gentlemen were very young; the girls were pretty; a pianist and a fiddler played indefatigably one polka after another; there was no cessation to the noise of conversation and dancing. But there was a sense of awkwardness and constraint; every one felt somehow or other — and this is not unusual — that all was not as it should be.

There were several attempts made to make things more lively, but the simulated liveliness was much worse than melancholy.

One of the five young men, who was more discontented than any one else, with himself and with the others, and with the whole evening, got up with a feeling of disgust, took his hat, and went out noiselessly, intending to go home.

There was no one in the anteroom, but in the next room at the door he heard two voices disputing. The young man paused, and listened.

"It is impossible, there are guests in there," said a woman's voice.

"Come, let me in, please. I will not do any harm," urged a man, in a gentle voice.

"Indeed, I will not let you in without the madame's permission," said the woman. "Where are you going? Oh, what a man you are!" ....

The door was flung open, and on the threshold appeared the figure of a strange-looking man. Seeing a guest, the maid ceased to detain him; and the stranger, timidly bowing, with a somewhat unsteady gait, came into the room.

He was a man of medium stature, with a lank, crooked back, bow legs, and long disheveled hair. He wore a short paletot, and tight ragged trousers over coarse dirty boots. His necktie, twisted into a string, exposed his long white neck. His shirt was filthy, and the sleeves came down over his lean hands.

But, notwithstanding his excessively emaciated body, his face was attractive and fair; and a fresh color even mantled his cheeks under his thin dark beard and side-whiskers. His disheveled locks, thrown back, exposed a low and remarkably pure forehead. His dark, languid eyes looked unswervingly forward with an expression of serenity, submission, and sweetness, which made a fascinating combination with the expression of his fresh, curved lips, visible under his thin mustache.

Advancing a few steps, he paused, turned to the young man, and smiled. He found it apparently rather hard to smile. But his face was so lighted up by it, that the young man, without knowing why, smiled in return.

"Who is that man?" he asked of the maid in a whisper, as the stranger walked toward the room where the dancing was going on.

"A crazy musician from the theater," replied the maid. "He sometimes comes to call upon the madame."

"Where are you going, Delyesof?" some one at this moment called from the drawing-room.

The young man who was called Delyesof returned to the drawing-room. The musician was now standing at the door; and, as his eyes fell on the dancers, he showed

by his smile and by the beating of his foot how much pleasure this spectacle afforded him.

"Won't you come and have a dance, too?" said one of the guests to him.

The musician bowed, and looked at the madame inquiringly.

"Come, come. Why not, since the gentlemen have invited you?" said the madame.

The musician's thin, weak features suddenly began to work; and smiling and winking, and shuffling his feet, he awkwardly, clumsily, proceeded to prance through the room.

In the midst of a quadrille a jolly officer, who was dancing very beautifully and with great liveliness, accidentally hit the musician in the back. His weak, weary legs lost their equilibrium; and the musician,[1] staggering several steps to one side, measured his length on the floor.

Notwithstanding the sharp, hard sound made by his fall, almost every one at the first moment laughed.

But the musician did not rise. The guests grew silent, even the piano ceased to sound. Delyesof and the madame were the first to reach the prostrate musician. He was lying on his elbow, and gloomily looking down. When he had been lifted to his feet, and set in a chair, he threw back his hair from his forehead with a quick motion of his bony hand, and began to smile without replying to the questions that were put.

"Mr. Albert! Mr. Albert!" exclaimed the madame. "Were you hurt? Where? Now, I told you that you had better not try to dance.... He is so weak," she added, addressing her guests. "It takes all his strength."

"Who is he?" some one asked the madame.

"A poor man, an artist. A very nice young fellow; but he 's a sad case, as you can see."

She said this undeterred by the musician's presence. He suddenly opened his eyes, and, as if he were frightened at something, shrank away, and pushed aside those who were standing about him.

[1] *Khozyaĭka.*

"It 's nothing at all," said he, suddenly, arising from the chair with evident effort.

And in order to show that he had suffered no injury, he went into the middle of the room, and was going to dance; but he tottered, and would have fallen again, had he not been supported.

Everybody felt awkward. All looked at him, and no one spoke.

The musician's glance again lost its vivacity; and, apparently forgetting that any one was looking, he began to rub his knee with his hand. Suddenly he raised his head, advanced one faltering foot, and, with the same awkward gesture as before, tossed back his hair, and went to a violin-case, and took out the instrument.

"It was nothing at all," said he again, waving the violin. "Gentlemen, we will have a little music."

"What a strange face!" said the guests among themselves.

"Maybe there is great talent lurking in that unfortunate creature," said one of them.

"Yes; it 's a sad case, — a sad case," said another.

"What a lovely face! .... There is something extraordinary about it," said Delyesof. "Let us have a look at him." ....

CHAPTER II

Albert by this time, not paying attention to any one, had raised his violin to his shoulder, and was slowly crossing over to the piano, and tuning his instrument. His lips were drawn into an expression of indifference, his eyes were almost shut; but his lank, bony back, his long white neck, his crooked legs, and shaggy black hair presented a strange but somehow not entirely ridiculous spectacle. After he had tuned the violin, he struck a quick chord, and, throwing back his head, turned to the pianist, who was waiting to accompany him.

"*Mélancolie*, G *dur*," he said, turning to the pianist with a peremptory gesture.

And immediately after, as if in apology for his peremptory gesture, he smiled sweetly, and with the same smile turned to his audience again.

Tossing back his hair with his right hand, Albert stood at one side of the piano, and, with a flowing motion of his arm, drew the bow across the strings. Through the room there swept a pure, harmonious sound, which instantly brought absolute silence.

At first there seemed to be a clear light. The notes of the theme poured forth in full abundance and exquisitely beautiful, after the dawn of the first light so unexpectedly clear and serene, suddenly illuminating the inner world of each hearer's consciousness.

Not one discordant or imperfect note distracted the attention. All the tones were clear, beautiful, and full of meaning. All silently, with trembling expectation, followed the development of the theme. From the state of tedium, of noisy gayety, or of spiritual drowsiness, into which these people had fallen, they were suddenly transported to a world the existence of which they had wholly forgotten.

There arose in their souls, now a sense of quiet contemplation of the past, now of passionate remembrance of some happiness, now the boundless longing for power and glory, now feelings of humility, of unsatisfied love, and of melancholy.

Now bitter-sweet, now vehemently despairing, the notes, freely intermingling, poured forth and poured forth, so sweetly, so powerfully, and so spontaneously, that it was not so much that sounds were heard, as that some sort of beautiful stream of poetry, long known, but now for the first time expressed, gushed through the soul.

At each note he played, Albert grew taller and taller. At a little distance, he had no appearance of being either crippled or peculiar. Pressing the violin to his chin, and with an expression of listening with passionate attention to the tones he produced, he convulsively moved his feet. Now he straightened himself up to his full height, now eagerly bent his back.

His left hand, bent intensely over the strings, seemed as it had swooned in its position, while only the bony fingers changed about spasmodically; the right hand moved smoothly, gracefully, without effort.

His face shone with absolute, enthusiastic delight; his eyes gleamed with a radiant, steely light; his nostrils quivered, his red lips were parted in rapture.

Sometimes his head bent down closer to his violin, his eyes almost closed, and his face, half shaded by his long locks, lighted up with a smile of genuine bliss. Sometimes he quickly straightened himself up, changed from one leg to the other, and his pure forehead and the radiant look which he threw around the room were alive with pride, greatness, and the consciousness of power.

Once the pianist made a mistake and struck a false chord. Physical pain was apparent in the whole form and face of the musician. He paused for a second, and with an expression of childish anger stamped his foot, and cried, "*Moll, ce moll!*" The pianist corrected his mistake; Albert closed his eyes, smiled, and, again forgetting himself and every one else and the whole world, gave himself up with beatitude to his work.

All who were in the room while Albert was playing preserved an attentive silence, and seemed to live and breathe only in the music.

The gay officer sat motionless in a chair by the window, with his lifeless eyes fixed on the floor, and breathing slowly and heavily long, heavy sighs. The girls, in perfect silence, sat along by the walls, only occasionally exchanging glances expressive of approval, or occasionally becoming perplexity.

The madame's fat, smiling face was radiant with happiness. The pianist kept his eyes fixed on Albert's face, and while his whole figure from head to foot showed his solicitude lest he should make some mistake, he did his best to follow him. One of the guests, who had been drinking more heavily than the rest, lay at full length on a divan, and tried not to move lest he should betray his emotion.

Delyesof experienced an unusual sensation. It seemed as if an icy band, now contracting, now expanding, were pressed on his head. The roots of his hair seemed endued with consciousness; the cold shivers ran down his back, something rose higher and higher in his throat, his nose and palate were full of little needles, and the tears stole down his cheeks.

He shook himself, tried to swallow them back and wipe them away without attracting attention, but fresh tears followed and streamed down his face. By some sort of strange association of impressions, the first tones of Albert's violin carried Delyesof back to his early youth.

Old before his time, weary of life, a broken man, he suddenly felt as if he were a boy of seventeen again, self-satisfied and handsome, blissfully dull, unconsciously happy. He remembered his first love for his cousin who wore a pink dress; he remembered his first confession of it in the linden alley; he remembered the warmth and the inexpressible charm of the fortuitous kiss; he remembered the immensity and enigmatical mystery of Nature as it surrounded them then.

In his imagination, as it went back in its flight, *she* gleamed in a mist of indefinite hopes, of incomprehensible desires, and the indubitable faith in the possibility of impossible happiness. All the priceless moments of that time, one after the other, arose before him, not like unmeaning instants of the fleeting present, but like the immutable, full-formed, reproachful images of the past.

He contemplated them with rapture, and wept, — wept not because the time had passed and he might have spent it more profitably (if that time had been given to him again, he would not have spent it any more profitably), but he wept because it had passed and would never return. His recollections evolved themselves without effort, and Albert's violin was their interpreter. It said, "They have passed, forever passed, the days of thy strength, of love, and of happiness; passed forever, and never will return. Weep for them, shed all thy

tears, let thy life pass in tears for these days; this is the only and best happiness that remains to thee."

At the end of the next variation, Albert's face grew serene, his eyes flushed, great, clear drops of perspiration poured down his cheeks. The veins swelled on his forehead; his whole body swayed more and more; his lips had grown pale and were parted, and his whole figure expressed an enthusiastic craving for enjoyment.

Despairingly swaying with his whole body, and throwing back his hair, he laid down his violin, and with a smile of proud satisfaction and happiness gazed at his audience. Then his back assumed its ordinary curve, his head sank, his lips grew set, his eyes lost their fire; and, as if he were ashamed of himself, timidly glancing round, and stumbling, he went into the next room.

CHAPTER III

Something strange came over all the audience, and something strange was noticeable in the dead silence that succeeded Albert's playing. Apparently, each desired, and yet was not able, to express what it all meant.

What did it mean, — this brightly lighted, warm room, these brilliant women, the dawn just appearing at the windows, these hurrying pulses, and the pure impressions made by the fleeting sounds? But no one attempted to acknowledge the meaning of it all; on the contrary, almost all, feeling incapable of going wholly in the direction of that which the new impression concealed from them, rebelled against it.

"Well, now, he plays mighty well," said the officer.

"Wonderfully," replied Delyesof, stealthily wiping his cheek with his sleeve.

"One thing sure, it's time to be going, gentlemen," said he who had been lying on the divan, straightening himself up a little. "We'll have to give him something, gentlemen. Let us make a collection."

At this time, Albert was sitting alone in the next room on a divan. As he leaned his elbows on his bony knees,

he smoothed his face with his dirty, sweaty hands, tossed back his hair, and smiled at his own happy thoughts.

A large collection was taken up, and Delyesof was chosen to present it.

Aside from this, Delyesof, who had been so keenly and unusually affected by the music, had conceived the thought of conferring some benefit on this man.

It came into his head to take him home with him, to feed him, to establish him somewhere, — in other words, to lift him from his vile position.

"Well, are you tired?" asked Delyesof, approaching him. Albert replied with a smile. "You have creative talent; you ought seriously to devote yourself to music, to play in public."

"I should like to have something to drink," exclaimed Albert, as if suddenly waking up.

Delyesof brought him some wine, and the musician greedily drained two glasses.

"What splendid wine!" he exclaimed.

"What a lovely thing that *Mélancolie* is!" said Delyesof.

"Oh, yes, yes," replied Albert, with a smile. "But pardon me, I do not know with whom I have the honor to be talking; maybe you are a count or a prince. Could n't you let me have a little money?" He paused for a moment. "I have nothing — I am a poor man; I could n't pay it back to you."

Delyesof flushed, grew embarrassed, and hastily handed the musician the money that had been collected for him.

"Very much obliged to you," said Albert, seizing the money. "Now let us have some more music; I will play for you as much as you wish. Only let me have something to drink, something to drink," he repeated, as he started to his feet.

Delyesof gave him some more wine, and asked him to sit down by him.

"Pardon me if I am frank with you," said Delyesof. "Your talent has interested me so much. It seems to me that you are in a wretched position."

Albert glanced now at Delyesof, now at the madame, who just then came into the room.

"Permit me to help you," continued Delyesof. "If you need anything, then I should be very glad if you would come and stay with me for a while. I live alone, and maybe I could be of some service to you."

Albert smiled, and made no reply.

"Why don't you thank him?" said the madame. "It seems to me that this would be a capital thing for you. —Only I would advise you not," she continued, turning to Delyesof, and shaking her head warningly.

"Very much obliged to you," said Albert, seizing Delyesof's hand with both his moist ones. "Only now let us have some music, please."

But the rest of the guests were already making their preparations to depart; and as Albert had not addressed them, they came out into the anteroom.

Albert bade the madame farewell; and, having put on his worn hat with wide brim, and a last summer's *alma viva*, which composed his only protection against the winter, he went with Delyesof down the steps.

As soon as Delyesof took his seat in his carriage with his new friend, and became conscious of that unpleasant odor of intoxication and filthiness exhaled by the musician, he began to repent of the step he had taken, and to curse himself for his childish softness of heart and lack of reason. Moreover, all that Albert said was so foolish and in such bad taste, and now that he was out in the open air he seemed suddenly so disgustingly intoxicated, that Delyesof was disgusted.

"What shall I do with him?" he asked himself.

After they had been driving for a quarter of an hour, Albert relapsed into silence, his hat slipped off his head and fell to his feet, he himself sprawled out in a corner of the carriage, and began to snore.

The wheels crunched monotonously over the frozen snow, the feeble light of dawn scarcely made its way through the frosty windows.

Delyesof glanced at his companion. His long body, wrapped in his mantle, lay almost lifeless near him. It

seemed to him that a long head with large black nose was swaying on his trunk; but on examining more closely he perceived that what he took to be nose and face was the man's hair, and that his actual face was lower down.

He bent over and studied the features of Albert's face. Then the beauty of his brow and of his peacefully closed mouth once more charmed him. Under the influence of nervous excitement caused by the sleepless hours of the long night and the music, Delyesof, as he looked at that face, was once more carried back to the blessed world of which he had caught a glimpse once before that night; again he remembered the happy and *magnanimous* time of his youth, and he ceased to repent of his impulsive act. At that moment he loved Albert truly and warmly, and firmly resolved to be a benefactor to him.

CHAPTER IV

THE next morning, when Delyesof was awakened to go to his office, he saw, with an unpleasant feeling of surprise, his old screen, his old servant, and his clock on the table.

"What did I expect to see if not the usual objects that surround me?" he asked himself.

Then he recollected the musician's black eyes and happy smile; the motive of the *Mélancolie* and all the strange experiences of the night came back into his consciousness. It was never his way, however, to reconsider whether he had done wisely or foolishly in taking the musician home with him. After he had dressed, he carefully laid out his plans for the day; he took some paper, wrote out some necessary directions for the house, and hastily put on his cloak and galoshes.

As he went by the dining-room he glanced in at the door. Albert, with his face buried in the pillow and lying at full length in his dirty, tattered shirt, was buried in the profoundest slumber on the morocco

divan, where in absolute unconsciousness he had been deposited some hours before.

Delyesof could not help feeling that something was not right.

"Please go for me to Boriuzovsky, and borrow his violin for a day or two," said he to his man; "and when he wakes up, bring him some coffee, and get him some clean linen and some old suit or other of mine. Fit him out as well as you can, please."

When he returned home in the afternoon, Delyesof, to his surprise, found that Albert was not there.

"Where is he?" he asked of his man.

"He went out immediately after dinner," replied the servant. "He took the violin, and went out, saying that he would be back again in an hour; but since that time we have not seen him."

"Ta, ta! how provoking!" said Delyesof. "Why did you let him go, Zakhar?"

Zakhar was a Petersburg lackey, who had been in Delyesof's service for eight years. Delyesof, as a bachelor, living alone, could not help intrusting him with his plans, and liked to get his judgment in regard to each of his undertakings.

"How should I have ventured to detain him?" replied Zakhar, playing with his watch-charms. "If you had intimated, Dmitri Ivanovitch, that you wished me to keep him here, I might have kept him at home. But you only spoke of his wardrobe."

"Ta! how vexatious! Well, what has he been doing while I was out?"

Zakhar smiled.

"Indeed, he 's a real artist, as one may say, Dmitri Ivanovitch. As soon as he woke up he asked for some Madeira; then he began to keep the cook and me pretty busy. Such an absurd .... However, he 's a very interesting character. I brought him some tea, got some dinner ready for him; but he would not eat alone, so he asked me to sit down with him. But when he began to play on the fiddle, then I knew that you would not find many such artists at Izler's. One might well

keep such a man. When he played 'Down the Little Mother Volga' for us, why, it was enough to make a man weep. It was too good for anything! The people from the floors came down into our entry to listen." ....

"Well, did you give him some clothes?" asked the barin, interrupting.

"Certainly I did; I gave him your night-shirt, and I put on him a paletot of my own. You want to help such a man as that, he's a fine fellow." Zakhar smiled. "He kept asking me what rank you were, and if you had important acquaintances, and how many souls of peasantry you had."

"Very good; but now we must send and find him; and henceforth don't give him anything to drink, otherwise you'll do him more harm than good."

"That is true," said Zakhar, in assent. "He doesn't seem in very robust health; my former barin used to have an overseer who, like him ...."

Delyesof, who had already long ago heard the story of the drunken overseer, did not give Zakhar time to finish, but bade him make everything ready for the night, and then go out and bring the musician back.

He threw himself down on his bed, and put out the candle; but it was long before he fell asleep, for thinking about Albert.

"This may seem strange to some of my friends," said Delyesof to himself, "but it is so seldom I can do anything for any one besides myself, that I ought to thank God for a chance when one presents itself, and I will not lose it. I will do everything. I certainly will do everything I can to help him. Maybe he is not absolutely crazy, but only inclined to get drunk. It certainly will not cost me very much. Where one is, there is always enough to satisfy two. Let him live with me awhile, and then we will find him a place, or get him up a concert; we'll help him off the shoals, and then there will be time enough to see what will come of it."

An agreeable sense of self-satisfaction came over him after making this resolution.

"Certainly I am not a bad man; I might say I am far from being a bad man," he thought. "I might go so far as to say that I am a good man, when I compare myself with others." ....

He had just dropped off to sleep when the sound of opening doors, and steps in the anteroom, roused him again.

"Well, shall I treat him rather severely?" he asked himself; "I suppose that is best, and I ought to do it."

He rang.

"Well, did you find him?" he asked of Zakhar, who answered his call.

"He's a poor, wretched fellow, Dmitri Ivanovitch," said Zakhar, shaking his head significantly, and closing his eyes.

"What! is he drunk?"

"Very weak."

"Had he the violin with him?"

"I brought it; the lady gave it to me."

"All right. Now please don't bring him to me to-night; let him sleep it off; and to-morrow don't under any circumstances let him out of the house."

But before Zakhar had time to leave the room, Albert came in.

CHAPTER V

"You don't mean to say that you've gone to bed at this time!" said Albert, with a smile. "I was there again, at Anna Ivanovna's. I spent a very pleasant evening. We had music, — fine sport; there was a very pleasant company there. Please let me have a glass of something to drink," he added, seizing a carafe of water that stood on the table, "only not water."

Albert was just as he had been the night before, — the same lovely, smiling eyes and lips, the same fresh, inspired brow, and weak features. Zakhar's paletot fitted him as if it had been made for him, and the clean, wide, unstarched collar of the night-shirt pic-

turesquely fitted around his slender white neck, giving him a peculiarly childlike and innocent appearance.

He sat down on Delyesof's bed, smiling with pleasure and gratitude, and looked at him without speaking. Delyesof gazed into Albert's eyes, and suddenly felt himself once more under the sway of that smile. All desire for sleep vanished from him, he forgot his resolution to be stern; on the contrary, he felt like having a gay time, to hear some music, and to talk confidentially with Albert till morning.

Delyesof bade Zakhar bring a bottle of wine, cigarettes, and the violin.

"This is excellent," said Albert. "It's early yet, we'll have a little music. I will play whatever you like."

Zakhar, with evident satisfaction, brought a bottle of Lafitte, two glasses, some mild cigarettes such as Albert smoked, and the violin. But, instead of going off to bed as his barin bade him, he lighted a cigar, and sat down in the next room.

"Let us talk instead," said Delyesof to the musician, who was beginning to tune the violin.

Albert sat down submissively on the bed, and smiled pleasantly.

"Oh, yes!" said he, suddenly striking his forehead with his hand, and putting on an expression of anxious curiosity. The expression of his face always gave an intimation of what he was going to say. "I wanted to ask you," — he hesitated a little, — "that gentleman who was there with you last evening..... You called him N. Was he the son of the celebrated N.?"

"His own son," replied Delyesof, not understanding at all what Albert could find of interest in him.

"Indeed!" he exclaimed, smiling with satisfaction. "I instantly noticed that there was something peculiarly aristocratic in his manners. I love aristocrats. There is something splendid and elegant about an aristocrat. And that officer who danced so beautifully," he went on to ask. "He also pleased me very much, he was so gay and noble-looking. He is called Adjutant N. N."

"Who?" asked Delyesof.

"The one who ran into me when we were dancing. He must be a splendid man."

"No, he is a silly fellow," replied Delyesof.

"Oh, no! it can't be," rejoined Albert, hotly. "There's something very, very pleasant about him. And he 's a glorious musician," he added. "He played something from an opera. It 's a long time since I have seen any one who pleased me so much."

"Yes, he plays very well; but I don't like his playing," said Delyesof, wishing to bring his companion to talk about music. "He does not understand classic music, but only Donizetti and Bellini; and that 's no music, you know. You agree with me, don't you?"

"Oh, no, no! Pardon me," replied Albert, with a gentle expression of opposition. "The old music is music; but modern music is music, too. And in the modern music there are extraordinarily beautiful things. Now, 'Somnambula,' and the *finale* of 'Lucia,' and Chopin, and 'Robert'! I often think," — he hesitated, apparently collecting his thoughts, — "that if Beethoven were alive, he would weep tears of joy to hear 'Somnambula.' It 's so beautiful all through. I heard 'Somnambula' first when Viardot and Rubini were here. That was something worth while," he said, with shining eyes, and making a gesture with both hands, as if he were casting something from his breast. "I 'd give a good deal, but it would be impossible, to bring it back."

"Well, but how do you like the opera nowadays?" asked Delyesof.

"Bosio is good, very good," was his reply, "exquisite beyond words; but she does not touch me here," he said, pointing to his sunken chest. "A singer must have passion, and she has n't any. She is enjoyable, but she does n't torture you."

"Well, how about Lablache?"

"I heard him in Paris, in 'The Barber of Seville.' Then he was the only one, but now he is old. He can't be an artist, he is old."

"Well, supposing he is old, still he is fine in *mor*

ceaux d'ensemble," said Delyesof, still speaking of Lablache.

"How can he be old?" said Albert, severely. "He can't be old. The artist can never be old. Much is needed in an artist, the fire most of all," he declared with glistening eyes, and raising both hands in the air. And, indeed, a terrible inner fire seemed to glow throughout his whole frame. "Ah, my God!" he exclaimed suddenly. "You don't know Petrof, do you,—Petrof, the artist?"

"No, I don't know him," replied Delyesof, with a smile.

"How I wish that you and he might become acquainted! You would enjoy talking with him. How he does understand art! He and I often used to meet at Anna Ivanovna's, but now she is vexed with him for some reason or other. But I really wish that you might make his acquaintance. He has great, great talent."

"Oh! Does he paint pictures?" asked Delyesof.

"I don't know. No, I think not; but he was an artist of the Academy. What thoughts he had! Whenever he talks, it is wonderful. Oh, Petrof has great talent, only he leads a very gay life!.... It's too bad," said Albert, with a smile. The next moment he got up from the bed, took the violin, and began to tune it.

"Have you been at the opera lately?" asked Delyesof.

Albert looked round and sighed.

"Ah, I have not been able to!" he said, clutching his head. Again he sat down by Delyesof. "I will tell you," he went on to say, almost in a whisper. "I can't go; I can't play there. I have nothing, nothing at all .... no clothes, no home, no violin. It's a wretched life .... a wretched life!" he repeated several times. "Yes, and why have I got into such a state? Why, indeed? It ought not to have been," said he, smiling. "*Akh! Don Juan.*"

And he struck his head.

"Now let us have something to eat," said Delyesof.

Albert, without replying, sprang up, seized the violin, and began to play the *finale* of the first act of "Don Juan," accompanying it with a description of the scene in the opera.

Delyesof felt the hair stand up on his head, when he played the voice of the dying commander.

"No, I cannot play to-night," said Albert, laying down the instrument. "I have been drinking too much."

But, immediately afterward, he went to the table, poured out a brimming glass of wine, drank it at one gulp, and again sat down on the bed near Delyesof.

Delyesof looked steadily at Albert. The latter occasionally smiled, and Delyesof returned his smile. Neither of them spoke, but the glance and smile brought them close together into a reciprocity of affection. Delyesof felt that he was growing constantly fonder and fonder of this man, and he experienced an inexpressible pleasure.

"Were you ever in love?" he asked suddenly. Albert remained sunk in thought for a few seconds, then his face lighted up with a melancholy smile. He bent over toward Delyesof, and gazed straight into his eyes.

"Why did you ask me that question?" he whispered. "But I will tell you all about it. — I like you," he added, after a few moments of thought, and glancing around. "I will not deceive you, I will tell you all, just as it was, from the beginning." He paused, and his eyes took on a strange, wild appearance. "You know that I am weak in judgment," he said suddenly. "Yes, yes," he continued. "Anna Ivanovna has told you about it. She tells everybody that I am crazy. It is n't true, she says it for a joke; she is a good woman, but I really have not been quite well for some time." Albert paused again, and stood up, gazing with wide-opened eyes at the dark door. "You asked me if I had ever been in love. Yes, I have been in love," he whispered, raising his brows. "That happened long ago; it was at a time when I still had a place at the theater. I went to play second violin at the opera, and she came into a parquet box at the left."

Albert stood up, and bent over to Delyesof's ear. "But no," said he, "why should I mention her name? You probably know her, everybody knows her. I said nothing, but simply looked at her; I knew that I was a poor artist, and she an aristocratic lady. I knew that very well. I only looked at her, and had no thoughts."

Albert paused for a moment, as if making sure of his recollections.

"How it happened, I know not, but I was invited once to accompany her on my violin..... Now I was only a poor artist!" he repeated, shaking his head, and smiling. "But no, I cannot tell you, I cannot!" he exclaimed, again clutching his head. "How happy I was!"

"What? did you go to her house often?" asked Delyesof.

"Once, only once..... But it was my own fault; I was n't in my right mind. I was a poor artist, and she an aristocratic lady. I ought not to have spoken to her. But I lost my senses, I committed a folly. Petrof told me the truth: 'It would have been better only to have seen her at the theater.'"

"What did you do?" asked Delyesof.

"Ah! wait, wait, I cannot tell you that."

And, hiding his face in his hands, he said nothing for some time.

"I was late at the orchestra. Petrof and I had been drinking that evening, and I was excited. She was sitting in her box, and talking with a general. I don't know who that general was. She was sitting at the very edge of the box, with her arm resting on the rim. She wore a white dress, with pearls on her neck. She was talking with him, but she looked at me. Twice she looked at me. She had arranged her hair in such a becoming way! I stopped playing, and stood near the bass, and gazed at her. Then, for the first time, something strange took place in me. She smiled on the general, but she looked at me. I felt certain that she was talking about me; and suddenly, I seemed to be not in my place in the orchestra, but was standing in her box,

and seizing her hand in that place. What was the meaning of that?" asked Albert, after a moment's silence.

"That is the power of the imagination," said Delyesof.

"No, no,.... I cannot tell," said Albert, frowning. "Even then I was poor. I had no home; and when I went to the theater, I sometimes used to sleep there."

"What, in the theater? in the dark, empty auditorium?" asked Delyesof.

"Ah! I am not afraid of these stupid things. Ah! just wait a moment. As soon as everybody was gone, I went to that box where she had been sitting, and slept there. That was my only pleasure. How many nights I spent there! Only once again did I have that experience. At night many things seemed to come to me. But I cannot tell you much about them." Albert squinted his eyes, and looked at Delyesof. "What did it mean?" he asked.

"It was strange," replied the other.

"No, wait, wait!" He bent over to his ear, and said in a whisper: —

"I kissed her hand, wept there before her, and said many things to her. I heard the fragrance of her sighs, I heard her voice. She said many things to me that one night. Then I took my violin, and began to play softly. And I played beautifully. But it became terrible to me. I am not afraid of such stupid things, and I don't believe in them, but my head felt terribly," he said, smiling sweetly, and moving his hand over his forehead. "It seemed terrible to me on account of my poor mind; something happened in my head. Maybe it was nothing; what do you think?"

Neither spoke for several minutes.

"*Und wenn die Wolken sie verhüllen,*
Die Sonne bleibt doch ewig klar."[1]

hummed Albert, smiling gently. "That is true, is n't it?" he asked.

[1] E'en though the clouds may veil it,
The sun shines ever clear.

"*Ich auch habe gelebt und genossen.*"[1]

"Ah, old man Petrof! how this would have made things clear to you!"

Delyesof, in silence and with dismay, looked at his companion's excited and colorless face.

"Do you know the Juristen waltzes?" suddenly asked Albert, in a loud voice; and, without waiting for an answer, jumped up, seized the violin, and began to play the lively waltz. In absolute self-forgetfulness, and evidently imagining that a whole orchestra was playing for him, Albert smiled, danced, shuffled his feet, all the time playing admirably.

"Hey, we will have some sport!" he exclaimed, as he ended, and waved his violin. "I am going," said he, after sitting down in silence for a little. "Won't you come along, too?"

"Where?" asked Delyesof, in surprise.

"Let us go to Anna Ivanovna's again. It's gay there, — bustle, people, music."

Delyesof for a moment was almost persuaded. However, coming to his senses, he tried to prevent Albert from going that day.

"I should like to go this minute."

"Indeed, I would n't go."

Albert sighed, and laid down the violin.

"Shall I stay, then?"

He looked over at the table, but the wine was gone; and so, wishing him good-night, he left the room.

Delyesof rang.

"See here," said he to Zakhar, "don't let Mr. Albert go anywhere without asking me about it first."

CHAPTER VI

THE next day was a holiday. Delyesof, on waking, sat in his parlor, drinking his coffee and reading a book. Albert, who was in the next room, had not yet moved.

[1] I also have lived and enjoyed.

Zakhar discreetly opened the door, and looked into the dining-room.

"Would you believe it, Dmitri Ivanovitch, there he lies asleep on the bare divan. I would not send him away for anything, God knows. He 's like a little child. Indeed, he 's an artist!"

At twelve o'clock, there was a sound of yawning and coughing on the other side of the door.

Zakhar again went into the dining-room; and Delyesof heard his wheedling voice, and Albert's gentle, beseeching voice.

"Well, how is he?" asked Delyesof, when Zakhar came out.

"He is in low spirits, Dmitri Ivanovitch. He does n't want to get dressed. He 's so cross. All he asks for is something to drink."

"Now, if we are to get hold of him, we must strengthen his character," said Delyesof, to himself. And, forbidding Zakhar to give him any wine, he again devoted himself to his book; in spite of himself, however, listening all the time to what was going on in the dining-room.

But there was no movement there, only occasionally were heard a heavy chest cough and spitting. Two hours passed. Delyesof, after dressing to go out, resolved to look in upon his guest. Albert was sitting motionless at the window, leaning his head on his hands.

He looked round. His face was sallow, morose, and not only melancholy but deeply unhappy. He tried to welcome his host with a smile, but his face assumed a still more woebegone expression. It seemed as if he were on the point of tears.

With effort he stood up and bowed.

"If I might have just a little glass of simple vodka," he exclaimed, with a supplicating expression. "I am so weak. If you please!"

"Coffee will be more strengthening, I would advise you."

Albert's face instantly lost its childish expression; he

gazed coldly, sadly, out of the window, and fell back feebly into the chair.

"Would n't you like some breakfast?"

"No, thank you, I have n't any appetite."

"If you want to play on the violin, you will not disturb me," said Delyesof, laying the instrument on the table.

Albert looked at the violin with a contemptuous smile.

"No, I am too weak, I cannot play," he said, and pushed the instrument from him.

After that, in reply to all Delyesof's propositions to go to walk, to go to the theater in the evening, or anything else, he only shook his head mournfully, and preserved an obstinate silence.

Delyesof went out, made a few calls, dined with some friends, and before the theater hour, he returned to his rooms to change his attire and find out how the musician was getting along.

Albert was sitting in the dark anteroom, and, with his head resting on his hand, was gazing at the heated stove. He was neatly dressed, washed, and combed; but his eyes were sad and vacant, and his whole form expressed even more weakness and debility than in the morning.

"Well, have you had dinner, Mr. Albert?" asked Delyesof.

Albert nodded his head affirmatively, and, after looking with a terrified expression at Delyesof, dropped his eyes. It made Delyesof feel uncomfortable.

"I have been talking to-day with a manager," said he, also dropping his eyes. "He would be very glad to make terms with you, if you would like to accept an engagement."

"I thank you, but I cannot play," said Albert, almost in a whisper; and he went into his room, and closed the door as softly as possible. After a few minutes, lifting the latch as softly as possible, he came out of the room, bringing the violin. Casting a sharp, angry look at Delyesof, he laid the instrument on the table, and again disappeared.

Delyesof shrugged his shoulders, and smiled.

"What am I to do now? Wherein am I to blame?" he asked himself.

"Well, how is the musician?" was his first question when he returned home late that evening.

"Bad," was Zakhar's short and ringing reply. "He sighs all the time, and coughs, and says nothing at all, only he has asked for vodka four or five times, and once I gave him some. We shall be killing him this way, Dmitri Ivanovitch. That was the way the overseer...."

"Well, has n't he played on the fiddle?"

"Did n't even touch it. I carried it to him twice.... Well, he took it up slowly, and brought it out," said Zakhar, with a smile. "Do you still bid me refuse him something to drink?"

"Don't give him anything to-day; we 'll see what 'll come of it. What is he doing now?"

"He has shut himself into the drawing-room."

Delyesof went into his library, took down a few French books and the Testament in German.

"Put these books to-morrow in his room; and look out, don't let him get away," said he to Zakhar.

The next morning Zakhar informed his barin that the musician had not slept a wink all night. "He kept walking up and down his rooms, and going to the sideboard to try to open the cupboard and door; but everything, in spite of his efforts, remained locked."

Zakhar told how, while pretending to go to sleep, he heard Albert muttering to himself in the darkness and gesticulating.

* * * * * *

Each day Albert grew more gloomy and taciturn. It seemed as if he were afraid of Delyesof, and his face expressed painful terror whenever their eyes met. He did not touch either book or violin, and made no replies to the questions put to him.

On the third day after the musician came to stay with him, Delyesof returned home late in the evening, tired

and worried. He had been on the go all day, attending to his duties. Though they had seemed very simple and easy, yet, as is often the case, he had not made any progress at all, in spite of his strenuous endeavors. Afterward he had stopped at the club, and lost at whist. He was out of spirits.

"Well, God be with him," he replied to Zakhar, who had been telling him of Albert's pitiable state. "To-morrow I shall be really worried about him. Is he willing or not to stay with me, and follow my advice? No? Then it 's idle. I have done the best that I could."

"That 's what comes of trying to be a benefactor to people," said he to himself. "I am putting myself to inconvenience for him. I have taken this filthy creature into my rooms, which keeps me from receiving strangers in the morning; I work and am kept on the run; and yet he looks on me as some enemy who, against his will, would keep him in pound. But the worst is that he is not willing to take a step in his own behalf. That 's the way with them all."

That word *all* referred to people in general, and especially to those with whom he had been associated in business that day. "But what is to be done for him now? What is he contemplating? Why is he melancholy? Is he melancholy because of the debauch from which I rescued him? on account of the degradation in which he has been? the humiliation from which I saved him? Can it be that he has fallen so low that it is a burden for him to look on a pure life? ....

"No, this was a childish action," reasoned Delyesof. "Why should I undertake to direct others, when it is as much as I can do to manage my own affairs?"

The impulse came over him to let him go immediately, but after a little deliberation he postponed it till the morning.

During the night Delyesof was aroused by the noise of a falling table in the anteroom, and the sound of voices and stamping feet. He lighted a candle, and began to listen with amazement.

"Just wait a little, I will tell Dmitri Ivanovitch," said

Zakhar's voice; Albert's voice replied passionately and incoherently.

Delyesof leaped up, and went with his candle into the anteroom. Zakhar, in his night-dress, was standing against the door; Albert, in cap and *alma viva*, was trying to pull him away, and was screaming at him in a pathetic voice: —

"You have no right to detain me; I have a passport; I have not stolen anything from you. You must let me go. I will go to the police."

"I beg of you, Dmitri Ivanovitch," said Zakhar, turning to his barin, and continuing to stand guard at the door. "He got up in the night, found the key in my paletot, and he has drunk up the whole decanter of sweet vodka. Was that good? And now he wants to go. You ordered me not to let him out, and so I could not let him go."

Albert, seeing Delyesof, began to pull still more violently on Zakhar.

"No one has the right to detain me! He cannot do it," he screamed, raising his voice more and more.

"Let him go, Zakhar," said Delyesof. "I do not wish to detain you, and I have no right to, but I advise you to stay till to-morrow," he added, addressing Albert.

"No one has the right to detain me. I am going to the police," screamed Albert, more and more furiously, addressing only Zakhar, and not heeding Delyesof. "Guard!" he suddenly shouted at the top of his voice.

"Now, what are you screaming like that for? You see you are free to go," said Zakhar, opening the door.

Albert ceased screaming.

"How did they dare? They were going to murder me! No!" he muttered to himself, as he put on his galoshes. Not bidding them good-by, and still muttering something unintelligible, he went out of the door. Zakhar accompanied him to the gate, and came back.

"Thank the Lord, Dmitri Ivanovitch! Any longer would have been a sin," said he to his barin. "And now we must verify the silver."

Delyesof only shook his head, and made no reply

There came over him a lively recollection of the first two evenings which he and the musician had spent together; he remembered the last wretched days which Albert had spent there; and, above all, he remembered the sweet but absurd sentiment of wonder, of love, and of sympathy which had been aroused in him by the very first sight of this strange man; and he began to pity him.

"What will become of him now?" he asked himself. "Without money, without warm clothing, alone at midnight!"

He thought of sending Zakhar after him, but now it was too late.

"Is it cold outdoors?" he asked.

"A healthy frost, Dmitri Ivanovitch," replied the man. "I forgot to tell you that you will have to buy some more firewood to last till spring."

"But what did you mean by saying that it would last?"

CHAPTER VII

Out of doors it was really cold; but Albert did not feel it, he was so excited by the wine that he had taken and by the quarrel.

As he entered the street, he looked around him, and rubbed his hands with pleasure. The street was empty, but the long lines of lights were still brilliantly gleaming; the sky was clear and beautiful. "What!" he cried, addressing the lighted window in Delyesof's apartments; and then, thrusting his hands into his trousers pockets under his paletot, and looking straight ahead, he walked with heavy and uncertain steps straight up the street.

He felt an extraordinary heaviness in his legs and abdomen, something hummed in his head, some invisible power seemed to hurl him from side to side; but he still plunged ahead in the direction of where Anna Ivanovna lived.

Strange, disconnected thoughts rushed through his head. Now he remembered his quarrel with Zakhar, now something recalled the sea, and his first voyage in the steamboat to Russia; now the merry night that he had spent with some friend in the wine-shop by which he was passing; then suddenly there came to him a familiar air, singing itself in his recollections, and he seemed to see the object of his passion and the terrible night in the theater.

But notwithstanding their incoherence, all these recollections presented themselves before his imagination with such distinctness that when he closed his eyes he could not tell which was nearer to the reality, — what he was doing, or what he was thinking. He did not realize and he did not feel how his legs moved, how he staggered and hit against a wall, how he looked around him, and how he made his way from street to street. He realized and felt only that which presented itself to him, fantastically changing and confusing him.

As he went along the Little Morskaya, Albert tripped and fell. Collecting himself in a moment, he saw before him a huge and magnificent edifice, and he went toward it.

In the sky not a star was to be seen, nor sign of dawn, nor moon, neither were there any street-lights there; but all objects were perfectly distinguishable. The windows of the edifice, which loomed up at the corner of the street, were brilliantly lighted, but the lights wavered like reflections. The building kept coming nearer and nearer, clearer and clearer, to Albert.

But the lights vanished the moment Albert entered the wide portals. Inside it was dark. He took a few steps under the vaulted ceiling, and something like shadows glided by and fled at his approach.

"Why did I come here?" wondered Albert; but some irresistible power dragged him forward into the depths of the immense hall....

There stood some lofty platform, and around it in silence stood what seemed like little men. "Who is going to speak?" asked Albert. No one answered,

but some one pointed to the platform. There stood now on the platform a tall, thin man, with bushy hair and dressed in a variegated khalat. Albert immediately recognized his friend Petrof.

"How strange! what is he doing here?" said Albert to himself.

"No, brethren," said Petrof, pointing to something, "you did not appreciate the man while he was living among you; you did not appreciate him! He was not a cheap artist, not a merely mechanical performer, not a crazy, ruined man. He was a genius, a great musical genius, who perished among you unknown and unvalued."

Albert immediately understood of whom his friend was speaking; but not wishing to interrupt him, he hung his head modestly.

"He, like a sheaf of straw, was wholly consumed by the sacred fire which we all serve," continued the voice. "But he has completely fulfilled all that God gave him; therefore he ought to be considered a great man. You may despise him, torture him, humiliate him," continued the voice, more and more energetically, "but he has been, is, and will be immeasurably higher than you all. He is happy, he is good. He loved you all alike, or cared for you, it is all the same; but he has served only that with which he was so highly endowed. He loved one thing, — beauty, the only infinite good in the world. Oh, yes, what a man he is! Fall all of you before him. On your knees!" cried Petrof, in a thundering voice.

But another voice mildly answered from another corner of the hall. "I do not wish to bow my knee before him," said the voice.

Albert instantly recognized that it was Delyesof's voice.

"Why is he great? And why should we bow before him? Has he conducted himself in an honorable and righteous manner? Has he brought society any advantage? Do we not know how he borrowed money, and never returned it; how he carried off a violin that belonged to a brother artist, and pawned it?"....

"My God! how did he know all that?" said Albert to himself, drooping his head still lower.

"Do we not know," the voice went on, "how he pandered to the lowest of the low, pandered to them for money?" continued Delyesof. "Do we not know how he was driven out of the theater? How Anna Ivanovna threatened to hand him over to the police?"

"My God! that is all true, but protect me," cried Albert. "You are the only one who knows why I did so."

"Stop, for shame!" cried Petrof's voice again. "What right have you to accuse him? Have you lived his life? Have you experienced his enthusiasms?"

"Right! right!" whispered Albert.

"Art is the highest manifestation of power in man. It is given only to the favored few, and it lifts the chosen to such an eminence that the head swims, and it is hard to preserve its integrity. In art, as in every struggle, there are heroes who bring all under subjection to them, and perish if they do not attain their ends."

Petrof ceased speaking; and Albert lifted his head, and tried to shout in a loud voice, "Right! right!" but his voice died without a sound.

"That is not the case with you. This does not concern you," sternly said the artist Petrof, addressing him. "Yes, humble him, despise him," he continued, "for he is better and happier than all the rest of you."

Albert, with rapture in his heart at hearing these words, could not contain himself, but went up to his friend, and was about to kiss him.

"Get you gone, I do not know you," replied Petrof. "Go your own way, you cannot come here."

"Here, you drunken fellow, you cannot come here," cried a policeman at the crossing.

Albert hesitated, then collected all his forces, and, endeavoring not to stumble, crossed over to the next street.

It was only a few steps to Anna Ivanovna's. From the hall of her house a stream of light fell on the snowy dvor, and at the gate stood sledges and carriages.

Clinging with both hands to the balustrade, he made his way up the steps, and rang the bell.

The maid's sleepy face appeared at the open door, and looked angrily at Albert.

"It is impossible," she cried; "I have been forbidden to let you in," and she slammed the door.

The sounds of music and women's voices floated down to him.

Albert sat down on the ground, and leaned his head against the wall, and shut his eyes. At that very instant a throng of indistinct but correlated visions took possession of him with fresh force, mastered him, and carried him off into the beautiful and free domain of fancy.

"Yes! he is better and happier," involuntarily the voice repeated in his imagination.

From the door were heard the sounds of a polka. These sounds also told him that he was better and happier. In a neighboring church was heard the sound of a prayer bell; and the prayer bell also told him that he was better and happier.

"Now I will go back to that hall again," said Albert to himself. "Petrof must have many things still to tell me."

There seemed to be no one now in the hall; and, in the place of the artist Petrof, Albert himself stood on the platform, and was playing on his violin all that the voice had said before.

But his violin was of strange make: it was composed of nothing but glass, and he had to hold it with both hands, and slowly rub it on his breast to make it give out sounds. The sounds were so sweet and delicious, that Albert felt he had never before heard anything like them. The more tightly he pressed the violin to his breast, the more sweet and consoling they became. The louder the sounds, the more swiftly the shadows vanished, and the more brilliantly the walls of the hall were illuminated. But it was necessary to play very cautiously on the violin, lest it should break.

Albert played on the instrument of glass cautiously

and well. He played things the like of which he felt no one would ever hear again.

He was growing tired, when a heavy distant sound began to annoy him. It was the sound of a bell, but this sound seemed to have a language.

"Yes," said the bell, with its notes coming from somewhere far off and high up, "yes, he seems to you wretched; you despise him, but he is better and happier than you. No one ever will play more on that instrument!"

These words which he understood seemed suddenly so wise, so novel, and so true to Albert, that he stopped playing, and, while trying not to move, lifted his eyes and his arms toward heaven. He felt that he was beautiful and happy. Although no one was in the hall, Albert expanded his chest, and proudly lifted his head, and stood on the platform so that all might see him.

Suddenly some one's hand was gently laid on his shoulder; he turned around, and in the half-light saw a woman. She looked pityingly at him, and shook her head. He immediately became conscious that what he was doing was wrong, and a sense of shame came over him.

"Where shall I go?" he asked her.

Once more she gazed long and fixedly at him, and bent her head pityingly. She was the one, the very one whom he loved, and her dress was the same; on her full white bosom was the pearl necklace, and her lovely arms were bare above the elbows.

She took him in her arms, and bore him away from the hall. "The exit is on that side," said Albert, but she, not answering, smiled, and bore him away from the hall. At the entrance of the hall, Albert saw the moon and water. But the water was not below as is usually the case, and the moon was not above; there was a white circle in one place as sometimes happens. The moon and the water were together, — everywhere, above and below, and on all sides and around them both. Albert and his love darted off toward the moon and the water, and he now realized that she whom he loved more than all

in the world was in his arms: he embraced her, and felt inexpressible felicity.

"Is not this a dream?" he asked himself. But no, it was the reality, it was more than reality; it was reality and recollection combined.

Then he felt that the indescribable pleasure which he had felt during the last moment was gone, and would never be renewed.

"Why am I weeping?" he asked of her. She looked at him in silence, with pitying eyes. Albert understood what she desired to say in reply. "Just as when I was alive," he went on to say. She, without replying, looked straight forward.

"This is terrible! How can I explain to her that I *am* alive?" he asked himself in horror. "My God, I am alive! Do understand me," he whispered.

"He is better and happier," said a voice.

But something kept oppressing Albert ever more powerfully. Whether it was the moon or the water, or her embrace or his tears, he could not tell, but he was conscious that he could not say all that he ought to say, and that all would be quickly over.

* * * * * *

Two guests coming out from Anna Ivanovna's rooms stumbled against Albert lying on the threshold. One of them went back to Anna Ivanovna, and called her. "That was heartless," he said. "You might let a man freeze to death that way."

"Why, that is my Albert. See where he was lying!" exclaimed the madame. "Annushka, have him brought into the room; find a place for him somewhere," she added, addressing the maid.

"Oh! I am alive, why do you bury me?" muttered Albert, as they brought him unconscious into the room.

TWO HUSSARS

A TALE

(1856)

Jomini, ay, Jomini,
But not a half a word of vodka.[1]

— D. DAVUIDOF.

AT the very beginning of this century, when there were no railways, no macadamized roads, no gas-light or stearine candles, no low and springy divans, no furniture without veneer, no disillusionized young men with eye-glasses, no female philosophers of liberal tendencies, no pretty *dames aux Camélias*, such as our time has produced in abundance; in those innocent days when travelers made the journey from Moscow to Petersburg by stage or carriage, and took with them all the appurtenances of a domestic kitchen, and traveled for a week, night and day, over soft roads, muddy or dusty as the case might be, pinned their faith to Pozharsky cutlets, Valdaï bluebells, and rolls; when during the long autumn evenings tallow candles burned till they had to be snuffed, and cast their rays on family circles of twenty or thirty people — at balls, wax or spermaceti candles were set up in candelabra; when furniture was placed with stiff precision; when our fathers were still young, not merely by the absence of wrinkles and gray hair, but fought duels for women,

[1] From the poem entitled, "The Song of an Old Hussar," in which a veteran contrasts the mighty days of the past with the trivial present. Denis Vasilyevitch Davuidof, who was an officer of hussars, died in 1839. — ED.

and would rush from one end of a room to the other to pick up a handkerchief dropped accidentally or otherwise, and our mothers wore short waists and huge sleeves, and decided family affairs by the drawing of lots; when the charming *dames aux Camélias* avoided the light of day; in the naïve period of Masonic lodges, of Martinists, and of the *Tugendbund;* at the time of the Miloradovitches, Davuidofs, and Pushkins, — a meeting of landed proprietors took place in the governmental city of K., and the election of the college of nobles was drawing to a close.

CHAPTER I

"Well, it's all the same, be it in the hall," said a young officer dressed in a shuba, and wearing a hussar's helmet, as he dismounted from a traveling sledge in front of the best hotel of the city of K.

"The house is full, little father, your excellency,[1] — a tremendous crowd," said the hall-boy, who had already learned from the officer's man that it was Count Turbin, and therefore dignified him with the title of "your excellency." "Madame Afremof and her daughters have expressed the intention of going away this evening; you can be accommodated with their room as soon as it is vacated, — No. 11," the hall-boy went on to say, noiselessly showing the count the way, and constantly turning round to look at him.

In the general "hall," at a small table under a blackened full-length portrait of the Emperor Alexander, sat a number of men, evidently belonging to the local aristocracy, drinking champagne; and on one side were some traveling merchants in blue shubas.

The count entered the room, and calling Blücher, a huge gray boarhound which accompanied him, he threw off his cloak, the collar of which was covered with frost, and, after ordering vodka, sat down at the table in a

[1] *Batyushka vashe Siatyelstvo;* the *yamshchik* (postilion or driver) shortens this title into *vasyaso.*

short blue satin jacket, and entered into conversation with the gentlemen sitting there. The latter, attracted toward the newcomer by his handsome and frank exterior, offered him a glass of champagne.

The count had begun to drink his glass of vodka; but now he also ordered a bottle of champagne, in order to return the courtesy of his new companions.

The driver came in to ask for vodka money.

"Sashka,"[1] cried the count, "give it to him."

The driver went out with Sashka, but quickly returned, holding the money in his hands.

"What! little father, 'slency, is that right? I did my best for you. You promised me a half-ruble, and he has only given me a quarter!"

"Sashka, give him a ruble."

Sashka, hanging down his head, gazed at the driver's feet.

"He will have enough," said he, in his deep voice. "Besides, I have n't any more money."

The count drew from his pocket-book the two solitary blue notes[2] which were in it, and gave one to the driver, who kissed his hand, and went off. "I have come to the end," said the count, "my last five rubles."

"True hussar style, count," said one of the nobles, whose mustaches, voice, and a certain energetic freedom in the use of his legs proclaimed him, beyond peradventure, to be a retired cavalryman. "Are you going to spend some time here, count?"

"I must have some money if I stay, otherwise I should not be very likely to. Besides, there are no spare rooms, the devil take it, in this cursed tavern."

"I beg of you, count," pursued the cavalryman, "would n't you like to come in with me? My room is No. 7. If you would n't object to sleeping there for the present. You might stay on with us for three days at least. To-night there 's to be a ball at the marshal's; how glad he would be to see you!"

"That 's right, count, stay with us," urged another of

[1] Diminished diminutive of Aleksandr.

[2] Blue notes were five rubles.

the table companions, a handsome young man. "What is your hurry? And besides, this happens only once in three years, — these elections. We might get a glimpse of some of our girls, count!"

"Sashka, get me some clean linen. I am going to have a bath," said the count, rising. "And then we will see; perhaps I may decide to pay my respects to the marshal."

Then he called the waiter, and said something to him in an undertone. The waiter replied, with a laugh, "That is within human possibility," and went out.

"Well, then, batyushka, I have given orders to have my trunk taken to your room," cried the count, as he went out of the door.

"I shall consider it a favor; it delights me," replied the cavalryman, as he hastened to the door, and cried, "No. 7; don't forget!"

When the count's steps could no longer be heard, the cavalryman returned to his place, and drawing his chair nearer to a functionary, and looking directly at him with smiling eyes, said: —

"Well, he's the very one."

"What one?"

"I tell you that he's that very same hussar duelist, — let me see, the famous Turbin. He knew me. I'll wager he knew me. I assure you, at Lebedyan' he and I were on a spree for three weeks, and were never sober once. That was when I was after a remount. There was one little affair at that time, — we were engaged in it together. Ah, he is a gay lad! isn't he, though?"

"Indeed he is. What pleasant manners he has! There's no fault to be found with him," replied the handsome young man. "How quickly we became acquainted!.... He isn't more than twenty-five, is he?"

"He certainly would not seem so, would he?.... But he's really more than that. Well, now you want to know who he is, don't you? Who carried off the Migunova? He did. He killed Sablin. He kicked Matnyef out of the window. He 'did' Prince Nesterof out of

three hundred thousand rubles. He 's a regular madcap, you must know, — a gambler, duelist, seducer, but a whole-souled fellow, a genuine hussar. We got talked about a good deal, but if any one really understood what it meant to be a genuine hussar! Those were great times."

And the cavalryman began to tell his comrade of a drinking-bout with the count at Lebedyan' which had never taken place, nor could have taken place. It could not have taken place, first because he had never seen the count before, and had retired from the service two years before the count had entered it; and secondly, because this cavalryman had never served in the cavalry, but had served four years as a very insignificant yunker in the Bielevsky regiment; and just as soon as he was promoted to be ensign, he retired.

But ten years before he had received an inheritance, and actually went to Lebedyan'; and there he spent seven hundred rubles with the cavalry officers, and had had made for him an uhlan's uniform with orange lapels, with the intention of entering the uhlans. His thought of entering the cavalry, and his three weeks spent with the officers at Lebedyan', made the very happiest and most brilliant period of his life; so that he began to transfer his thought into a reality. Then, as he added remembrance to it, he began actually to believe in his military past, — but this did not prevent him from being a genuinely worthy man through his kindness of heart and uprightness.

"Yes, any one who has never served in the cavalry," he went on to say, "will never understand us fellows."

He sat astride of his chair, and, thrusting out his lower jaw, went on in a deep voice: "It happens you are riding along in front of the battalion. A devil is under you, not a horse, prancing along; thus you sit on this perfect devil. The battalion commander comes along. 'Lieutenant,' says he, 'I beg of you — your service is absolutely indispensable. You must lead the battalion for the parade.' Very well, and so it goes. You look around, you give a shout, you lead the brave

fellows who are under your command. .... Ah! the deuce take it! 't was a glorious time!"

The count came back from the bath, all ruddy, and with his hair wet, and went directly to No. 7, where the cavalryman was already sitting in his *khalat*, or dressing-gown, with his pipe, and thinking with delight and some little anxiety of the good fortune that had befallen him in sharing his room with the famous Turbin.

"Well, now," the thought came into his head, "suppose he should take me, and strip me naked, and carry me outside the town limits, and set me down in the snow .... or smear me with tar .... or simply .... But, no; he would not do such a thing to a comrade," he said, trying to comfort himself.

"Sashka, give Blücher something to eat," cried the count.

Sashka made his appearance. He had been drinking glasses of vodka ever since his arrival, and was beginning to be genuinely tipsy.

"You have not been able to control yourself. You have been getting drunk, you scoundrel![1] .... Feed Blücher."

"It won't kill him to fast. .... You see, ... he's so plump," replied Sashka, caressing the dog.

"Now, none of your impudence. Go and feed him."

"All you care for is to have your dog fat; but if a man drinks a little glass, then you pitch into him."

"Hey! I'll beat you!" cried the count, with a voice which made the window-panes rattle, and even to the cavalryman seemed rather terrible.

"You'd better ask if *Sashka* has had anything to eat to-day. All right, strike away, if a dog is more to you than a man," continued Sashka.

But at this he received such a violent blow of the fist across the face that he staggered, struck his head against the partition, and, clutching his nose, leaped through the door, and threw himself down on a chest in the corridor.

"He has broken my teeth," he growled, wiping his

[1] *Kanal'ya* from French *canaille*.

bloody nose with one hand, and with the other scratching Blücher's back, as the dog licked him. "He has broken my teeth, Blüchka; and yet he is my count, and I would jump into the fire for him, that's a fact. Because he's my count, do you understand, Blüchka? And do you want something to eat?"

After lying there awhile he got up, gave the dog his dinner, and, almost sobered, went to serve his count, and get him his tea.

"You would simply offend me," said the cavalryman, timidly, standing in front of the count, who was lying on the bed with his feet propped against the partition. "Now, you see, I am an old soldier and comrade, I may say; instead of letting you borrow of any one else, it would give me great pleasure to let you have two hundred rubles. I haven't them with me now, — only a hundred, — but I can get the rest to-day; don't refuse, you would simply offend me, count!"

"Thanks, old fellow,"[1] said Turbin, instantly perceiving what sort of relationship would exist between them, and slapping the cavalryman on the shoulder. "Thanks. Well, then, we'll go to the ball if you say so. But now what shall we do? Tell me what you have in your city: any pretty girls? any one ready for a spree? any one play cards?"

The cavalryman explained that there would be plenty of pretty girls at the ball; that the *ispravnik*, or district police, Captain Kolkoff, who had just been reëlected, was the greatest hand for sprees, only he lacked the spirit of a genuine hussar, but still was a first-rate fellow; that Ilyushka's chorus of gipsies had been singing at K. ever since the elections began; that Stioshka[2] was the soloist, and that after the marshal's reception every one was going there that evening.

"And the stakes are pretty high. Lukhnof, a visitor here," he said, "is sweeping in the money; and Ilyin, a cornet of uhlans, who rooms in No. 8, has already lost a pile. The game has already begun there. They play

[1] *Batyushka.*
[2] Diminutive of Stepanida, Stephanie.

there every evening; and he 's a wonderfully fine young fellow, I tell you, count, this Ilyin is. There 's nothing mean about him — he 'd give you his last shirt."

"Then let us go to his room. We will see what sort of men you have," said the count.

"Come on! come on! they will be awfully glad."

CHAPTER II

Ilyin, the cornet of uhlans, had not long been awake. The evening before, he had sat down at the gambling-table at eight o'clock, and lost for fifteen hours running till eleven o'clock that day. He had lost a great amount, but exactly how much he did not know, because he had had three thousand rubles of his own money, and fifteen thousand belonging to the treasury, which he had long ago mixed up with his own, and he dared not make a reckoning lest his anticipations that even the public money would not be sufficient to settle his debt should be confirmed.

He went to sleep about noon, and slept that heavy, dreamless sleep peculiar to very young men who have been losing heavily. Waking at six, about the time Count Turbin had arrived at the hotel, and seeing cards and chalk scattered around him on the floor, and the soiled tables in confusion in the room, he remembered with horror the evening's games, and the last card, a knave, which had lost him five hundred rubles; but, still scarcely believing in the reality, he drew out from under his pillow his money, and began to count it. He recognized a few bank-notes which, with corners turned down and indorsements, had gone from hand to hand around the table; he remembered all the particulars. He had lost his own three thousand rubles, and twenty-five hundred belonging to the treasury had disappeared.

The uhlan had been playing for four nights in succession.

He had come from Moscow, where the public money had been put into his hands. At K. the post-superin-

tendent had detained him under the pretext that there were no post-horses, but in reality in accordance with his agreement with the hotel-keeper to detain all visitors for a day.

The uhlan, who was a gay young fellow, and had just received from his parents at Moscow three thousand rubles for his military equipment, was glad to spend a few days in the city of K. during the elections, and counted on having a good time.

He knew a landed proprietor who lived there with his family, and he was preparing to call on him and pay his respects to his daughters, when the cavalryman appeared, made his acquaintance, and that very evening, without malice prepense, took him down into the parlor, and introduced him to his friends, Lukhnof and several other gamblers. From that time, the uhlan had kept steadily at gaming, and not only had not called on the proprietor, but had not thought of inquiring farther for horses, and for four days had not left his room.

After he had dressed, and taken his tea, he went to the window. He felt an inclination to go out, so as to dispel the importunate recollections of the game. He put on his cloak and went into the street.

The sun had just sunk behind the white houses with their red roofs. It was already twilight. It was mild. The snow was softly falling in big, damp flakes, into the muddy streets. His mind suddenly became filled with unendurable melancholy at the thought that he had wasted all that day in sleep, and now the day was done.

"This day which has gone will never come back again," he said to himself.

"I have ruined my youth," he suddenly exclaimed, not because he really felt that he had ruined his youth, — he did not think about it at all, — but simply this phrase came into his head.

"What shall I do now?" he reasoned; "borrow of some one, and go away?"

A lady was passing along the sidewalk.

"What a stupid woman!" he said to himself, for some unaccountable reason.

"There 's no one I can borrow of. I have ruined my youth."

He came to a block of stores. A merchant in a fox-skin shuba was standing at the door of his shop, and inviting custom.

"If I had n't taken the eight, I should have won."

A little old beggar-woman followed him, sniveling.

"I have no one to borrow of."

A gentleman in a bearskin shuba passed him. A policeman was standing on the corner.

"What can I do that will make a sensation? Fire a pistol at them? No! That would be stupid. I have ruined my youth. Oh! what a splendid harness that is hanging in that shop! I should like to be riding behind a troïka! .... Ekh! you fine fellows![1] I am going back. Lukhnof will be there pretty soon, and we 'll have a game."

He returned to the hotel, and once more counted his money. No, he had not been mistaken the first time; twenty-five hundred rubles of the public funds were missing, just as before.

"I will put up twenty-five rubles first; the next time, a quarter stake; then on seven, on fifteen, on thirty, and on sixty .... three thousand. I will buy that harness, and start. He won't give me any odds, the villain! I have ruined my youth!"

This was what was passing through the uhlan's mind just as Lukhnof came into the room.

"Well, have you been up long, Mikhaïlo Vasilyitch?" inquired Lukhnof, deliberately removing from his thin nose his gold eye-glasses, and carefully wiping them with a red silk handkerchief.

"No, only just this minute. I had a splendid sleep!"

"A new hussar has just come. He is staying with Zavalshevsky. Had you heard about it?"

"No, I had n't. Well, no one seems to be here yet."

"I believe they have gone to Priakhin's. They 'll be here very soon."

In fact, shortly after there came into the room an

[1] *Galubchiki*, little pigeons.

officer of the garrison, who was always hovering round Lukhnof; a Greek merchant with a huge hooked nose, cinnamon complexion, and deep-set black eyes; a stout, puffy proprietor, a brandy-distiller who gambled all night long, and always made his stakes on the basis of half a ruble. All of these wished to begin playing as promptly as possible, but the more daring players said nothing about it; Lukhnof, in particular, with perfect equanimity, told stories of rascality in Moscow.

"Just think of it," said he, "Moscow, the metropolis, the capital; and there they go out at night with crooks, dressed like demons; and they scare the stupid people, and rob pedestrians, and that is the end of it. Do the police notice it? No! It is astonishing!"

The uhlan listened attentively to the tales of these highwaymen, but finally got up and unobtrusively ordered cards to be brought. The stout proprietor was the first to express himself.

"Well, gentlemen, we are wasting golden moments. To work, let us to work!"

"Yes, you won by the half-ruble last evening, and so you like it," exclaimed the Greek.

"It's a good time to begin," said the garrison officer.

Ilyin looked at Lukhnof. Lukhnof, returning his gaze, went on calmly with his story of the robbers who dressed themselves up like devils with claws.

"Will you start the bank?" asked the uhlan.

"Is n't it rather early?"

"Byelof!" cried the uhlan, reddening for some reason or other, "bring me something to eat.... I have n't had any dinner to-day, gentlemen. Bring some champagne, and deal the cards."

At this moment, the count and Zavalshevsky entered. Turbin and Ilyin proved to be in the same division. They immediately struck up an acquaintance, drank some champagne together, clinking their glasses, and in five minutes were calling each other "thou."

It was evident that Ilyin made a very pleasant impression on the count. The count smiled whenever he looked at him, and was amused at his freshness.

"What a fine young uhlan!" he said, "what a mustache! what a splendid mustache!"

Ilyin's upper lip bore the first down of a mustache, which was as yet almost white.

"You were preparing to play, were you not?" asked the count. "Well, I should like to win from you, Ilyin. I think that you must be a master," he added, smiling.

"Yes, we were just starting in," replied Lukhnof, opening a pack of cards. — "Are n't you going to join us, count?"

"No, I won't to-night. If I did there would n't be anything left of any of you! When I take a hand I always break the bank. But I have n't any money just now. I lost at Volotchok, at the station-house. It was by some sort of infantryman who wore rings; what a cheat he was! and he cleaned me out completely."

"Were you long there at the station?" asked Ilyin.

"I stayed there twenty-two hours. I shall not forget that station, curse it! and the superintendent won't forget it either."

"Why?"

"I got there, you see; out came the superintendent, rascally face, the liar! 'There are no horses,' said he. Well, now I must tell you, I have made a rule in such cases: when there are no horses, I keep on my shuba, and go straight to the superintendent's room, — not the office, mind you, but the superintendent's own room, — and I have all the windows and doors opened, as if it were stifling. Well, that 's what I did here. Cold! you remember how cold it has been this last month; twenty degrees below. The superintendent began to remonstrate. I knock his teeth in for him. There was some old woman there; and some young girls and peasant-women set up a piping, were going to seize their pots and fly to the village..... I go to the door, and say, 'Let me have horses, and I 'll go away: if you don't, I won't let you out, I 'll freeze you all to death.'"

"What an admirable way!" said the puffy proprietor, bursting out into a laugh. "That 's the way one would freeze out cockroaches."

"But I was n't sufficiently on my guard: the superintendent and all his women managed to get out and run away. Only the old woman remained on the oven as my hostage. She kept sniffing, and offering prayers to God. Then we entered into negotiations. The superintendent came back, and, standing at a distance, tried to persuade me to let the old woman go. But I set Blücher on him: Blücher is a magnificent dog to take care of superintendents. Even then the rascal did not let me have horses till the next morning. And then came along that footpad! I went into the next room, and began to play. Have you seen Blücher? — Blücher! Fiu!"

Blücher came running in. The players received him with flattering attention, although it was evident that they were anxious to get to work at entirely different matters.

"By the way, gentlemen, why don't you begin your game? I beg of you, don't let me interfere with you. You see I am a chatterbox," said Turbin. "*Whether you love or not,* 't is an excellent thing."

CHAPTER III

Lukhnof took two candles, brought out a huge dark-colored pocket-book full of money; slowly, as if performing some sacrament, opened it on the table; took out two one-hundred-ruble notes, and placed them under the cards.

"There, just the same as last evening; the bank begins with two hundred," said he, adjusting his glasses, and opening a pack of cards.

"Very good," said Ilyin, not glancing at him, or interrupting his conversation with Turbin.

The game began. Lukhnof kept the bank with mechanical regularity, occasionally pausing, and deliberately writing down something, or looking sternly over his glasses, and saying in a weak voice, "Throw."

The stout proprietor talked more noisily than the rest, making various calculations aloud, while he wet

his clumsy fingers and bent down the corners of his cards.

The garrison officer silently wrote in a fine hand his account on a card, and under the table turned down small corners.

The Greek sat next the banker, attentively following the game with his deep black eyes, apparently waiting for something.

Zavalshevsky, as he stood by the table, would suddenly become all of a tremble, draw from his trousers pocket a red note or a blue,[1] lay a card on it, pound on it with his palm, and say, "Bring me luck, little seven!" Then he would bite his mustache, change from one leg to the other, and remain in a continual state of excitement until the card came out.

Ilyin, who had been eating veal and cucumbers placed near him on the haircloth divan, briskly wiped his hands on his coat, and began to put down one card after another.

Turbin, who had taken his seat at first on the divan, immediately noticed that something was wrong. Lukhnof did not look at the uhlan, or say anything to him; but occasionally his eyes for an instant rested on the uhlan's hands. The most of his cards lost.

"If I could only trump that little card," exclaimed Lukhnof in reference to a card played by the stout proprietor, who was still making half-ruble wagers.

"Trump Ilyin's instead; what would be the use of trumping mine?" replied the proprietor.

And, in point of fact, Ilyin's cards were trumped oftener than the others'. He nervously tore up his losing card under the table, and with trembling hands chose another.

Turbin arose from the divan, and asked the Greek to give him his place next the banker. The Greek changed places; and the count, taking his chair, and not moving his eyes, began to watch Lukhnof's hands attentively.

"Ilyin," said he, suddenly, in his ordinary voice, which,

[1] The five-ruble assignat was blue, the ten-ruble one was red, the twenty-five-ruble note was white. — ED.

without his intending to do so, drowned out the others, "why do you stick to those routine cards? You don't know how to play!"

"Supposing I don't, it's all the same."

"You 'll lose that way surely. Let me play against the bank for you."

"No, excuse me, I beg of you. I always play for myself. Play for yourself if you like."

"I have told you that I am not going to play. But I should like to play for you. I hate to see you losing so."

"Ah, well! you see it's my luck."

The count said nothing more, and, leaning on his elbow, began once more to watch the banker's hand just as attentively as before.

"Shameful!" he suddenly cried in a loud voice, dwelling on the word.

Lukhnof glared at him.

"Shameful, shameful!" he repeated still louder, staring straight into Lukhnof's eyes.

The game continued.

"That — is — not — right!" said Turbin again, as Lukhnof trumped one of Ilyin's high cards.

"What displeases you, count?" politely asked the banker, with an air of indifference.

"Because you give Ilyin a simplum, and turn down your corners. That's what is shameful!"

Lukhnof made a slight motion with his shoulders and brows, signifying that he was resigned to any fate, and then he went on with the game.

"Blücher, fiu!" cried the count, rising; "over with him!" he added quickly.

Blücher, bumping against the divan with his back, and almost knocking the garrison officer from his feet, came leaping toward his master, looking at every one and wagging his tail as if asking, "Who is misbehaving here, hey?"

Lukhnof laid down the cards, and moved his chair away.

"This is no way to play," said he. "I detest dogs.

What kind of a game can you have if a whole pack of hounds is to be brought in?"

"Especially that kind of dog; they are called blood-suckers, if I am not mistaken," suggested the garrison officer.

"Well, are we to play or not, Mikhaïlo Vasilyitch?" asked Lukhnof, addressing the uhlan.

"Don't bother us, count, I beg of you," said Ilyin, turning to Turbin.

"Come here for a moment," said Turbin, taking Ilyin's arm, and drawing him behind the partition.

Even then the count's words were perfectly audible, though he spoke in his ordinary tone. But his voice was so powerful that it could always be heard three rooms off.

"Are you beside yourself? Don't you see that that man with the glasses is a cheat of the worst order?"

"Hey? Nonsense! Be careful what you say."

"No nonsense! but quit it, I tell you. It makes no difference to me. Another time I myself would have plucked you; but now I am sorry to see you ruining yourself. Have you any public money left?"

"No. What makes you think so about him?"

"Brother, I have been over this same road, and I know the ways of these professional gamblers. I tell you that the man in the glasses is a cheat. Quit, please. I ask you as a comrade."

"All right; I 'll have just one more hand, and then have done with it."

"I know what that 'one more' means; very well, we will see."

They returned to the gaming-table. In one deal he laid down so many cards, and so many of them were trumped, that he lost a large amount.

Turbin rested his hand in the middle of the table: —

"That's enough! now let us be going."

"No, I can't go yet; leave me, please," said Ilyin, in vexation, shuffling the bent cards and not looking at Turbin.

"All right! the devil be with you! Lose all you 've

got, if that please you; but it 's time for me to be going. — Come, Zavalshevsky, let us go to the marshal's."

And they went out. No one spoke, and Lukhnof did not make the bank until the noise of their feet and of Blücher's paws had died away down the corridor.

"That 's a madcap," said the proprietor, smiling.

"Well, now he won't bother us any more," said the garrison officer, in a hurried whisper.

And the game went on.

CHAPTER IV

The band, composed of the marshal's domestic serfs, were stationed in the butler's pantry, which had been put in order on account of the ball, and, having turned up the sleeves of their coats, had begun at the signal of their leader to play the ancient polonaise, "Aleksandr, Yelisavieta"; and under the soft, brilliant light of the wax candles, the couples were just beginning to move in tripping measure through the great ball-room; a governor-general of Catherine's time, with a star, taking out the gaunt wife of the marshal, the marshal with the governor's wife, and so on throughout all the hierarchy of the government in various combinations and variations, — when Zavalshevsky, in a blue coat with a huge collar, and epaulets on his shoulders, and wearing stockings and pumps, and exhaling about him an odor of jasmine with which he had plentifully drenched his mustaches, the facings of his coat, and his handkerchief, entered with the handsome count, who wore tight-fitting blue trousers and a red pelisse embroidered with gold, and wearing on his breast the cross of Vladimir and a medal of 1812.

The count was of medium height, but had an extremely handsome figure. His clear blue eyes of remarkable brilliancy, and dark reddish hair which was rather long and fell in thick ringlets, gave his beauty a peculiar character.

The count was expected at the ball. The handsome young man who had seen him at the hotel had already spoken of him to the marshal.

The impressions made by this announcement were of various kinds, but on the whole were not altogether pleasant.

"I suppose this young man will turn us into ridicule," was what the old women and the men said to themselves.

"Suppose he should carry me off," was what the wives and young ladies thought, with more or less apprehension.

As soon as the polonaise was finished, and the couples had made each other low bows, once more the women formed little groups by themselves, and the men by themselves. Zavalshevsky, proud and happy, led the count up to the hostess.

The marshal's wife, conscious of a certain inward trepidation lest this hussar should make her the cause of some scandal before everybody, said proudly and scornfully, as she turned away, "Very glad to see you. I hope that you will dance." And then she looked at the count mistrustfully, with a peculiar expression, as much as to say, "Now, if you insult any woman, then you are a perfect scoundrel after this."

The count, however, quickly overcame this prejudice by his amiability, his politeness, and his handsome jovial appearance; so that in five minutes the expression on the face of the marshal's wife plainly declared to all who stood around her, "I know how to manage all these men. He immediately realized whom he was talking with. And now he will be charming to me all the rest of the evening."

Moreover, just then the governor, who had known his father, came up to the count, and very graciously drew him to one side, and entered into conversation with him, which still more pleased the fashionable society of the town, and raised the count in their estimation.

Then Zavalshevsky presented the count to his sister, a plump young widow, who, ever since the count entered

the room, had kept her big black eyes fastened on him.

The count asked the little widow for the waltz which at that moment the musicians had struck up, and his artistic dancing conquered the last vestiges of the popular prejudice.

"Ah, he's a master at dancing!" said a stout lady, following the legs in blue trousers which were flashing through the ball-room, and mentally counting, "One, two, three; one, two, three, — he's a master."

"How gracefully he moves his feet! how gracefully!" said another woman, who did not stand very high in the governmental society. "How does he manage to not hit any one with his spurs? Wonderful, very skilful!"

The count, by his skill in dancing, eclipsed the three best dancers of the city. These were, a governor's aide, a tall man with white eyebrows famous for his rapid dancing and because he held the lady pressed very close to his breast; secondly, the cavalryman, who was famous for his graceful swaying during the waltz, and for his frequent but light tapping with his heels; and thirdly, a civilian of whom everybody said that, though intellectually he was a light-weight, yet he was an admirable dancer and the life of all balls.

In point of fact, this civilian from the beginning to the end of a ball invariably invited all the ladies in the order in which they sat, did not cease for a moment to dance, and only occasionally paused to wipe his weary but radiant face with his cambric handkerchief, which would become wet through.

The count had surpassed them all, and had danced with the three principal ladies, — with the stout one, who was rich, handsome, and stupid; with the middle-sized one, who was lean, and not particularly good-looking, but handsomely dressed; and with the little one, who was not pretty, but very witty.

He had danced also with others, — with all the pretty women, and there were many pretty women there.

But the little widow, Zavalshevsky's sister, pleased the

count more than all the rest; with her he danced a quadrille and a schottische and a mazurka.

At first, when they took their places for the quadrille, he overwhelmed her with compliments, comparing her to Venus and Diana, and to a rose bush, and to some other flower besides.

To all these amenities the little widow only bent her white neck, modestly dropped her eyes, looking at her white muslin gown, or changing her fan from one hand to the other.

When, at last, she said, "This is too much, count; you are jesting," or words to that effect, her voice, which was rather guttural, betrayed such naïve simplicity of heart and amusing stupidity, that the count, as he looked at her, actually imagined that she was not a woman but a flower, not a rose, but some kind of a pinkish-white wild-flower, exuberant and odorless, growing alone on a virgin snowdrift in some far, far-distant land.

Such a strange impression was made on the count by this union of *naïveté* and unconventionality, together with fresh beauty, that several times, in the pauses of the conversation, when he looked silently into her eyes or contemplated the loveliness of her arms and neck, the desire came over him with such vehemence to take her into his arms and kiss her again and again, that he was really obliged to restrain himself.

The little widow was quite satisfied with the impression which she perceived that she had made; but there was something in the count's behavior that began to disquiet her and fill her with apprehensions, though the young hussar was not only flatteringly amiable, but even — as we nowadays should regard it — mawkishly polite to her.

He ran to get orgeat for her, picked up her handkerchief, snatched a chair from the hands of a scrofulous young proprietor, who also desired to pay her attention and who was not quick enough. But perceiving that such assiduities as were fashionable at that period had little effect on his lady, he began to amuse her by telling her ludicrous anecdotes: he assured her that if she would

bid him he was ready instantly to stand on his head, or to crow like a cock, or to jump out of the window, or to fling himself into a hole in the ice.

This procedure was a brilliant success: the little widow became very gay; she rippled with laughter, displaying her marvelous white teeth, and was entirely satisfied with her cavalier. The count each moment grew more and more enchanted with her, so that at the end of the quadrille he was genuinely in love with her.

After the quadrille, when she was approached by her former adorer, a young man of eighteen, the son of a very rich proprietor, the same scrofulous young man from whom Turbin had snatched away the chair, she received him with perfect coolness, and not one-tenth part of the constraint was noticeable in her which she felt when she was with the count.

"You are very kind," she said, all the time gazing at Turbin's back, and unconsciously reckoning how many yards of gold lace were used for his whole jacket. "You are very kind; you promised to come to take me for a walk, and to bring me some comfits."

"Well, I did come, Anna Feodorovna, but you were not at home, and I left the very best comfits for you," said the young man, in a voice which was very thin, considering his height.

"You are always provided with excuses; I don't need your comfits. Please do not think .... "

"I begin to see, Anna Feodorovna, how you have changed toward me, and I know why. But it is not right," he added, but without finishing his remark, evidently owing to some powerful interior emotion, which caused his lips to tremble strangely.

Anna Feodorovna did not heed him, and continued to follow Turbin with her eyes.

The marshal, at whose house the ball was given, — a stout but toothless old man, — majestically came up to the count, and, taking him by the arm, invited him into his library to smoke and drink if he so desired.

As soon as Turbin disappeared, Anna Feodorovna felt that there was absolutely nothing for her to do in

the ball-room, and, slipping her hand through the arm of a dried-up old maid, who was a friend of hers, went with her into the dressing-room.

"Well, what do you think of him? Is he nice?" asked the old maid.

"Only it's terrible — the way he follows you up!" said Anna Feodorovna, going to the mirror, and contemplating herself in it.

Her face was aglow, her eyes were full of mischief, her color was heightened; then suddenly imitating the ballet-dancers whom she had seen during election time, she pirouetted round on one toe, and, laughing her guttural but sweet laugh, she leaped up in the air, crossing her knees.

"What a man he is! he even asked me for a *souvenir*," she confided to her friend. "But he will ne-e-ver get one," she said, singing the last words, and lifting one finger in the kid glove which reached to her elbow. ....

In the library where Turbin was conducted by the marshal stood various kinds of vodka, liqueurs, edibles,[1] and champagne. In a cloud of tobacco-smoke the nobility were sitting, or walking up and down, talking about the elections.

"When the whole of the high nobility of our district has honored him with an election," exclaimed the newly elected ispravnik, who was already tolerably tipsy, "he certainly ought not to fail in his duties toward society in general." ....

The conversation was interrupted by the count's coming. All were presented to him, and the ispravnik especially pressed his hand long between both of his, and asked him several times to go with him after the ball to the new tavern, where he would treat the gentlemen of the nobility, and where they would hear the gipsies sing.

The count accepted his invitation, and drank with him several glasses of champagne.

"Why aren't you dancing, gentlemen?" he asked, as he was about to leave the library.

[1] *Zakuski.*

"We are n't dancers," replied the ispravnik, laughing. "We prefer the wine, count.... and besides, all these young ladies have grown up under my eyes, count. But still, I do sometimes take part in a schottische, count.... I can do it, count." ....

"Come on then for a while," said Turbin. "Let us have some sport before we go to the gipsies."

"What say you, gentlemen? Let us come! Let us delight our host!"

And the three gentlemen who, since the beginning of the ball, had been drinking in the library and had very red faces, began to draw on their gloves, some of black kid, another of knit silk, and were just going with the count to the ball-room, when they were detained by the scrofulous young man, who, pale as a sheet, and scarcely able to refrain from tears, came straight up to Turbin.

"You have an idea, because you are a count, you can run into people as if you were at a fair," said he, with difficulty drawing his breath; "hence it is n't fitting...."

Once more the stream of his speech was interrupted by the involuntary trembling of his lips.

"What?" cried Turbin, frowning suddenly, "what? .... You 're a baby," he cried, seizing him by the arm, and squeezing it so that the blood rushed to the young man's head, not so much from vexation as from fright. "What is it? Do you want to fight? If so, I am at your service."

Turbin had scarcely let go of his arm, which he had squeezed so powerfully, when two nobles seized the young man by the sleeve, and carried him off through a back door.

"What! have you lost your wits? You 've surely been drinking too much. We shall have to tell your papa. What 's the matter with you?" they asked.

"No, I have n't been drinking; but he ran into me, and did not apologize. He 's a hog, that 's what he is," whined the young man, now actually in tears.

Nevertheless they did not heed him, but carried him off home.

"Never mind, count," said the ispravnik and Zaval-

shevsky, assuringly. "He's a mere child. They still whip him; he's only sixteen years old. It's hard to tell what is to be done with him. What fly stung him? And his father is such an honorable man! He's our candidate."

"Well, the devil take him if he refuses." ....

And the count returned to the ball-room, and, as gayly as before, danced the schottische with the pretty little widow, and laughed heartily when he saw the antics of the gentlemen who had come with him out of the library, and he joined in the general burst of merriment all through the ball-room when the ispravnik tripped and measured his length on the floor in the midst of the dancers.

CHAPTER V

Anna Feodorovna, while the count was in the library, went to her brother, and, for the very reason of her conviction that she ought to pretend to feel very little interest in the count, she began to question him: —

"Who is this hussar that has been dancing with me? Tell me, brother."

The cavalryman explained, to the best of his ability, what a great man this hussar was, and in addition he told his sister that the count had stopped there simply because his money had been stolen on the route; he himself had loaned him a hundred rubles, but that was not enough. Could n't his sister let him have two hundred more? Zavalshevsky asked her not to say anything about this to any one, and, above all, not to the count.

Anna Feodorovna promised to send the money the next day, and to keep it a secret; but somehow or other, during the schottische, she had a terrible desire to offer the count as much money as he needed.

She deliberated long, blushed, and at last, mastering her confusion, thus addressed herself to the task: —

"My brother told me, count, that you met with a mis-

fortune on the road, and had n't any money. Now, if you need some, would n't you take some of me? I should be awfully glad."

But after she had thus spoken, Anna Feodorovna was suddenly overcome with fright, and blushed. All the gayety had instantly vanished from the count's face.

"Your brother is a fool!" said he, in a cutting tone. "You know, when a man insults a man, then they fight a duel; but when a woman insults a man, then what do they do? Do you know?"

Poor Anna Feodorovna blushed to her ears with confusion. She dropped her eyes, and made no reply.

"They kiss the woman in public," said the count, softly, bending over to whisper in her ear. "Permit me, however, to kiss your little hand," he added, almost inaudibly, after a long silence, having some pity on his lady's confusion.

"Ah! only not quite yet," urged Anna Feodorovna, with a deep sigh.

"But when, then? To-morrow I am going away early..... But really, you owe it to me."

"Well, then of course it is impossible," said Anna Feodorovna, smiling.

"Only give me a chance to see you before to-morrow, so that I may kiss your hand. I will find one."

"How will you find one?"

"That is not your affair. I can do anything to see you..... Is it agreed?"

"Agreed."

The schottische came to an end; they danced through the mazurka, and in it the count did marvels, purloining handkerchiefs, bending on one knee, and clinking his spurs in an extraordinary manner, after the Warsaw style, so that all the old men came from their boston to look into the ball-room; and the cavalryman, who was the best dancer, confessed himself outdone. After they had eaten supper, they danced till the *Grossvater*, and began to disperse.

The count, all this time, did not take his eyes from the little widow. He had not been insincere when he de-

clared his readiness to throw himself into a hole in the ice.

Whether it was caprice, or love, or stubbornness, but that evening all the strength of his mind had been concentrated into one desire, — to see her, and to make love to her.

As soon as he perceived that Anna Feodorovna was taking her farewell of the hostess, he hastened to the servants' quarters, and thence, without his shuba, to the place where the carriages were drawn up.

"Anna Feodorovna Zaĭtsova's equipage," he cried.

A high, two-seated coach with lanterns moved out, and started to drive up to the doorstep.

"Stop!" shouted the count to the coachman, wading out to the carriage through snow that was knee-deep.

"What is wanted?" called the driver.

"I want to get into the carriage," replied the count, opening the door as the carriage moved, and trying to climb in.

"Stop, you devil! stupid! Vaska! stop!" cried the coachman to the postilion, and reining in the horses. "What are you getting into another person's carriage for? This belongs to the Lady Anna Feodorovna, and not to your grace."

"Hush up, blockhead! Here! there 's a ruble for you; now come down and shut the door!" said the count.

But as the coachman did not move, he lifted the steps himself, and, opening the window, managed to pull the door to.

In this, as in all ancient carriages, especially those upholstered in yellow galloon, there was an odor of mustiness and burnt bristles.

The count's legs were wet to the knees from melting snow, and almost freezing in his thin boots and trousers; and his whole body was penetrated by a cold like that of winter.

The coachman was grumbling on his box, and seemed to be preparing to get down. But the count heard nothing and felt nothing. His face was aglow, his heart was beating violently. He convulsively clutched the yellow

strap, thrust his head out of the side window, and his whole being was concentrated in the expectation of one thing.

He was not doomed to wait long. At the doorsteps, they shouted, "Zaïtsova's carriage!" The coachman shook his reins, the carriage swung on its high springs; the lighted windows of the house passed one after another by the carriage windows.

"See here, rogue, if you tell the lackey that I am here," said the count, thrusting his head through the front window, and addressing the coachman, "you 'll feel my whip; but if you hold your tongue, I will give you ten rubles more."

He had scarcely time to shut the window, when the carriage shook again still more violently, and then the wheels came to a stop.

He drew back as far as possible into the corner; he ceased to breathe; he even shut his eyes, so apprehensive was he that his passionate expectation would be disappointed.

The door was opened; one after the other, with a creak, the steps were let down; a woman's dress rustled, and the close atmosphere of the carriage was impregnated by the odor of jasmine; a woman's dainty feet hurried up the steps, and Anna Feodorovna, brushing against the count's leg with the skirt of her cloak, which was loosely thrown about her, silently, and with a deep sigh, took her place on the cushioned seat next him.

Whether she saw him or not, no one could decide, not even Anna Feodorovna herself; but when he took her hand, and said, "Now I will kiss your little hand anyway," she evinced very little dismay. She said nothing, but let him take her hand, and he covered it with kisses, even her arm above the glove.

The carriage rolled away.

"Tell me something. You are not angry?" said he to her.

She silently sank back into her corner, but suddenly, for some reason or other, burst into tears, and let her head fall on his breast.

CHAPTER VI

THE newly elected ispravnik, with his company, the cavalryman, and other members of the nobility, had already been listening for some time to the gipsies, and drinking at the new tavern, when the count, in a blue-lined bearskin shuba which had belonged to Anna Feodorovna's late husband, joined them.

"Little father, your excellency! we had almost given up expecting you," said a squint-eyed black gipsy who displayed a set of brilliant teeth, as he met him in the entry and hastened to divest him of his shuba. "We have n't met since we were at Lebedyan'. .... Stioshka has pined away on account of you."

Stioshka, a slender young gipsy girl[1] with a cherry red bloom on her cinnamon-colored cheeks, with brilliant deep black eyes, shaded by long eyelashes, also hurried to meet him.

"Ah! dear little count![2] my sweetheart! This is a pleasure," she exclaimed through her teeth, with a joyous smile.

Ilyushka himself came to greet Turbin, pretending that he was very glad to see him. The old women, the wives, the young girls, hastened to the spot and surrounded the guest.

One would have said that he was a relative or a godbrother to them.

Turbin kissed all the young gipsy girls on the lips; the old women and the men kissed him on the shoulder or on the hand.

The gentlemen were also very glad of the count's arrival; the more because the festivity, having passed its apogee, was now becoming tame; every one began to feel a sense of satiety. The wine, having lost its exhilarating effect on the nerves, only served to load the stomach. Every one had discharged the last cartridge of his wildness, and was looking around moodily. All

[1] *Tsiganotchka.*
[2] *Grafchik! galubchik!*

the songs had been sung, and ran in the heads of each, leaving a mere impression of noise and confusion.

Even if any one did something strange and wild, the rest seemed to look on it as nothing very entertaining or amusing.

The ispravnik, stretched out on the floor in shameless fashion at the feet of an old gipsy woman, was kicking his legs in the air, and crying: —

"Champagne!.... The count has come!.... Champagne!.... He has come!.... Now give us champagne!.... I will make a bath of champagne, and swim in it! Gentlemen of the nobility, I love your admirable society!.... Stioshka, sing 'The Narrow Road.'"

The cavalryman was also tipsy, but in a different fashion. He was sitting in the corner of a divan with a tall, handsome gipsy woman, Liubasha; and with the consciousness that intoxication was beginning to cloud his eyes, he kept blinking them, and swinging his head, and repeating the same words over and over again; he was proposing in a whisper to the gipsy to fly with him somewhere.

Liubasha, smiling, listened to him as if what he said were very amusing to her, and at the same time rather melancholy. Occasionally she cast her glances at her husband, the squint-eyed Sashka, who was standing behind a chair near her. In reply to the cavalryman's declaration of love, she bent over to his ear, and begged him to buy her some perfume and a ribbon without any one knowing it, so that the others should not see it.

"Hurrah!" cried the cavalryman when the count came in.

The handsome young man, with an expression of anxiety, was walking up and down the room with solicitously steady steps, and humming an air from the "Revolt in the Seraglio."

An old *paterfamilias*, dragged out to see the gipsies through the irresistible entreaties of the gentlemen of the nobility, who had told him that if he stayed away everything would go to pieces, and in that case they had better not go, was lying on a divan where he had stretched

himself out immediately on his arrival; and no one paid any attention to him.

A functionary, who had been there before, had taken off his coat, was sitting with his legs on the table, and was rumpling up his hair, and thus proving that he understood how to be dissipated. As soon as the count came in, he unbuttoned his shirt-collar, and lifted his legs still higher. The count's arrival gave new life generally to the festivities.

The gipsy girls, who had been scattered about the room, again formed their circle. The count seated Stioshka, the soloist, on his knee, and ordered more champagne to be brought. Ilyushka, with his guitar, stood in front of the soloist, and began the *plyaska*, that is, the gipsy song and dance. He played, "When I walk along the Street," "Hey! you Hussars," "Do you hear, do you understand?" and others of the usual order.

Stioshka sang splendidly. Her flexible, sonorous contralto, with its deep chest notes, her smiles while she was singing, her mischievous, passionate eyes, and her little foot which involuntarily kept time to the measure of the song, her despairing wail at the end of each couplet, — this all touched some resonant but tender chord. It was evident that she lived only in the song that she was singing.

Ilyushka, in his smile, his back, his legs, his whole being, carrying out in pantomime the idea expressed in the song, accompanied it on his guitar, and, fixing his eyes on her as if he were hearing her for the first time, attentively and carefully lifted and drooped his head with the rhythm of the song.

Then he suddenly straightened himself up as the singer sang the last note, and, apparently feeling himself superior to every one else in the world, with proud deliberation kicked the guitar, turned it over, stamped his foot, tossed back his locks, and looked at the chorus with a frown.

All his body, from his neck to his toes, began to dance in every sinew.

And twenty powerful, energetic voices, each trying

to outdo the other in making strange and extraordinary noises, were lifted in union.

The old women sprang down from their chairs, waving their handkerchiefs, and showing their teeth, and crying in rhythmic measure, each louder than the other. The bassos, leaning their heads on one side, and swelling their necks, bellowed from behind their chairs.

When Stioshka emitted her high notes, Ilyushka brought his guitar nearer to her as if he were trying to aid her; and the handsome young man, in his enthusiasm, cried out that now they struck B-flat.

When they came to the national dance, the *Plyasovaya*, and Duniasha, with shoulders and bosom shaking, stepped in front of the count, and was passing on, Turbin leaped from his place, took off his uniform, and, remaining only in his red shirt, boldly joined her, keeping up the same measure, and cutting with his feet such antics, that the gipsies laughed and exchanged glances of approval.

The ispravnik, who was sitting Turkish fashion, pounded his chest with his fist, and cried "*Vivat!*" and then, seizing the count by the leg, began to tell him that out of two thousand rubles, he had only five hundred left, and that it was at the count's disposal if only he would give him that pleasure.

The old *paterfamilias* woke up, and wanted to go home, but they would not let him. The handsome young man asked a gipsy girl to waltz with him. The cavalryman, anxious to exalt himself by his friendship with the count, got up from his corner, and embraced Turbin.

"Ah, my turtle-dove!" he cried. "Why did you leave us so soon? ha?"

The count said nothing, being evidently absorbed in thought.

"Where did you go? Ah, count, you rascal, I know where you went!"

This familiarity somehow displeased Count Turbin. Without smiling, he looked in silence into the cavalryman's face, and suddenly gave him such a terrible and

grievous affront that the cavalryman was mortified, and for some time did not know how to take such an insult, whether as a joke or not as a joke. At last he made up his mind that it was a joke; he smiled, and returned to his gipsy, assuring her that he would really marry her after Easter.

Another song was sung, a third, they danced again; the round of gayety was kept up, and every one continued to feel gay. There was no end to the champagne.

The count drank a great deal. His eyes seemed to grow rather moist, but he did not grow dizzy; he danced still better than the rest, spoke without any thickness, and even joined in a chorus, and supported Stioshka when she sang "The sweet emotion of friendship."

In the midst of the dance and song the merchant who kept the hotel came to beg the guests to go home, as it was three o'clock in the morning.

The count took the landlord by the throat, and ordered him to dance the prisiadka. The merchant refused. The count snatched a bottle of champagne, and standing the merchant on his head, ordered him to stay so, and then amid general hilarity slowly poured the whole bottle over him.

The dawn was already breaking. All were pale and weary except the count.

"At all events, I must be getting back to Moscow," said he, suddenly rising. "Come with me, all of you, to my room, boys. .... See me off, and let us have some tea."

All accompanied him with the exception of the sleeping proprietor, who still remained there; they piled into three sledges that were waiting at the door, and drove off to the hotel.

CHAPTER VII

"HAVE the horses put in!" cried the count, as he entered the sitting-room of the hotel with all his friends, including the gipsies.

"Sashka, — not the gipsy Sashka, but mine, — tell the superintendent that if the horses are poor I will flog him. Now, give us some tea. Zavalshevsky, make some tea; I am going to Ilyin's; I want to find how things have gone with him," added Turbin; and he went out into the corridor, and directed his steps to the uhlan's room.

Ilyin had just finished playing, and, having lost all his money down to his last kopek, had thrown himself face down on the worn-out haircloth divan, and was picking the hairs out one by one, sticking them into his mouth, biting them in two, and spitting them out again.

Two tallow candles, one of which was already burnt down to the paper, stood on the card-cluttered ombre-table, and mingled their feeble rays with the morning light which was beginning to shine through the window.

The uhlan's mind was vacant of all thought; that strange, thick fog of the gambling passion muffled all the capabilities of his mind, so that there was not even room for regret.

Once he endeavored to think what was left for him to do, how he should get away without a kopek, how he should pay back the fifteen thousand rubles of public money that he had lost in gambling, what his colonel would say, what his mother would say, what his comrades would say; and such fear came over him, and such disgust at himself, that, in his anxiety to rid himself of the thought of it, he arose and began to walk up and down through the room, trying only to walk on the cracks of the floor; and then once more he began to recall all the least details of the evening.

He vividly imagined that he was winning the whole back again; he takes a nine, and lays down a king of

spades on two thousand rubles; a queen lies at the right, at the left an ace, at the right a king of diamonds — and all was lost! But if he had had a six at the right and a king of diamonds at the left, then he would have won it all back, he would have staked all again on P, and would have won back his fifteen thousand rubles; then he would have bought a good pacer of the regimental commander, an extra pair of horses, and a phaëton. And what else besides? Ah! indeed, it would have been a splendid, splendid thing!

Again he threw himself down on the divan, and began to bite the hairs once more.

"Why are they singing songs in No. 7?" he wondered. "It must be they are having a jollification in Turbin's room. I'm of a good mind to go there and have a good drink."

Just at this moment the count came in.

"Tell me, have you been cleaned out, brother, hey?" he cried.

"I will pretend to be asleep, otherwise I shall have to talk with him, and I really want to sleep now."

Nevertheless, Turbin went up to him, and laid his hand caressingly on his head. ....

"Well, my dear little friend, have you been cleaned out? have you had bad luck? Tell me."

Ilyin made no reply.

The count took him by the arm.

"I have been losing. What is it to you?" muttered Ilyin, in a sleepy voice expressing indifference and vexation; he did not change his position.

"Everything?"

"Well, yes. What harm is there in it? All! What is it to you?"

"Listen: tell me the truth, as to a comrade," said the count, who, under the influence of the wine that he had been drinking, was disposed to be tender, and continued to smooth the other's hair. "You know I have taken a fancy to you. Tell me the truth. If you have lost the public money, I will help you out; if you don't, it will be too late. .... Was it public money?"

Ilyin leaped up from the sofa.

"If you wish me to tell you, don't speak to me so, because.... and I beg of you don't speak to me.... I will blow my brains out.... that's the only thing that's left for me now!" he exclaimed with genuine despair, letting his head sink into his hands, and bursting into tears, although but the moment before he had been calmly thinking about his horses.

"Ekh! you're a pretty young girl! Well, who might not have the same thing happen to him? It isn't so bad as it might be; perhaps we can straighten things out; wait for me here."

The count hastened from the room.

"Where is the pomyeshchik[1] Lukhnof's room?" he demanded of the hall-boy.

The hall-boy offered to show the count the way. The count forced his way into Lukhnof's room, in spite of the objections of the lackey, who said that his master had only just come in, and was preparing to retire.

Lukhnof in his dressing-gown was sitting in front of a table, counting over a number of packages of bank-notes piled up before him. On the table was a bottle of Rheinwein, of which he was very fond. He had procured himself this pleasure from his winnings.

Coldly, sternly, Lukhnof looked at the count over his glasses, affecting not to recognize him.

"It seems that you do not know me," said the count, approaching the table with resolute steps.

Lukhnof recognized the count, and asked: —

"What do you want?"

"I wish to play with you," said Turbin, sitting down on the divan.

"Now?"

"Yes."

"Another time I should be most happy, count; but now I am tired, and am getting ready to go to bed. Won't you have some wine? It is excellent wine."

"But I wish to play with you for a little while *now*."

"I am not prepared to play any more. Maybe some

[1] Landed proprietor.

of the other guests will. *I will not*, count! I beg of you to excuse me."

"So you will not?"

Lukhnof shrugged his shoulders as if to express his regret at not being able to fulfil the count's desires.

"Will you not play under any consideration?"

The same gesture.

"I am very desirous of playing with you..... Say, will you play, or not?"

Silence.

"Will you play?" asked the count a second time.

The same silence, and a quick glance over his glasses at the count's face, which was beginning to grow dark.

"Will you play?" cried the count in a loud voice, striking his hand on the table so violently that the bottle of Rheinwein toppled over and the wine ran out. "You have been cheating, have you not? Will you play? I ask you for the third time."

"I have told you, no! This is truly strange, count, ... perfectly unjustifiable, to come this way, and put your knife at a man's throat," remarked Lukhnof, not lifting his eyes.

A brief silence followed, during which the count's face grew paler and paler. Suddenly Lukhnof received a terrible blow on the head, which stunned him. He fell back on the divan, trying to grasp the money, and screamed in a penetratingly despairing tone, such as was scarcely to be expected from him, he was always so calm and imposing in his deportment.

Turbin gathered up the remaining bank-notes that were lying on the table, pushed away the servant who had come to his master's assistance, and with quick steps left the room.

"If you wish satisfaction, I am at your service; I shall be in my room for half an hour yet, — No. 7," added the count, turning back as he reached the door.

"Villain! thief!" cried a voice from within the room..... "I will have satisfaction at law!"

Ilyin, who had not paid any heed to the count's

promise to help him, was still lying on the divan in his room, drowned in tears of despair.

The count's caresses and sympathy had awakened him to a consciousness of the reality, and now, amidst the fog of strange thoughts and recollections which filled his mind, it made itself more and more felt.

His youth, rich in hopes, honor, his social position, the dreams of love and friendship, were all destroyed forever. The fountain of his tears began to run dry, a too calm feeling of hopelessness took possession of him; and the thought of suicide, now bringing no sense of repulsion or terror, more and more frequently recurred to him.

At this moment the count's firm steps were heard.

On Turbin's face were still visible the last traces of his recent wrath, his hands trembled slightly; but in his eyes shone a kindly gayety and self-satisfaction.

"There! It has been won back for you!" he cried, tossing on the table several packages of bank-notes. "Count them; are they all there? Then come as soon as possible to the sitting-room; I am going away immediately," he added, pretending not to perceive the tremendous revulsion of joy and gratefulness which rushed over the uhlan's face. Then, humming a gipsy song, he left the room.

CHAPTER VIII

SASHKA, tightening his girdle, was waiting for the horses to be harnessed, but insisted on going first to get the count's cloak, which, with the collar, must have been worth three hundred rubles, and return that miserable blue-lined shuba to that rascally man who had exchanged with the count at the marshal's. But Turbin said that it was not necessary, and went to his room to change his clothes.

The cavalryman kept hiccoughing as he sat silently by his gipsy girl. The ispravnik called for vodka, and invited all the gentlemen to come and breakfast

with him, promising them that his wife would, without fail, dance the national dance with the gipsies.

The handsome young man was earnestly arguing with Ilyushka that there was more soul in the pianoforte, and that it was impossible to take B-flat on the guitar. The functionary was gloomily drinking tea in one corner, and apparently the daylight made him feel ashamed of his dissipation.

The gipsies were conversing together in Romany, and urging that they should once more enliven the gentlemen; to which Stioshka objected, declaring that it would only vex the barorai.[1]

For all concerned, the last spark of the orgy was dying out.

"Well, then, one more song for a farewell, and then home with you," exclaimed the count, fresh, gay, and radiant above all the others, as he came into the room dressed in his traveling attire.

The gipsies had again formed their circle, and were just getting ready to sing, when Ilyin came in with a package of bank-notes in his hand, and drew the count to one side.

"I had only fifteen thousand rubles of public money, but you gave me sixteen thousand three hundred," said the uhlan; "this is yours, of course."

"That 's a fine arrangement. Let me have it."

Ilyin handed him the money, looking timidly at the count, and opened his mouth to say something; but then he reddened so painfully that the tears came into his eyes, and he seized the count's hand, and began to squeeze it.

"Away with you, Ilyushka.... listen to me! Now, here 's your money, but you must accompany me with your songs to the city limits!"

And he flung on the gipsy's guitar the thirteen hundred rubles which Ilyin had brought him. But the count had forgotten to repay the cavalryman the one hundred rubles which he had borrowed of him the evening before.

[1] *Baroraï*, in Romany, count or prince, or more correctly great barin. — AUTHOR'S NOTE IN TEXT.

It was now ten o'clock in the morning. The little sun was rising above the housetops, the streets were beginning to fill with people, the merchants had long ago opened their shops, nobles and functionaries were riding up and down through the streets, and ladies were out shopping, when the band of gipsies, the ispravnik, the cavalryman, the handsome young fellow, Ilyin, and the count, who was wrapped up in his blue-lined bear-skin shuba, came out on the door-steps of the hotel.

It was a sunny day, and it thawed. Three hired troïkas, with their tails knotted, and splashing through the liquid mud, pranced up to the steps; and the whole jolly company prepared to take their places. The count, Ilyin, Stioshka, Ilyushka, and Sashka, the count's man, mounted the first sledge.

Blücher was beside himself with delight, and, wagging his tail, barked at the shaft-horse.

The other gentlemen, together with the gipsies, men and women, climbed into the other sledges. From the very hotel the sledges flew off side by side, and the gipsies set up a merry chorus and song.

The troïkas with the songs and jingling bells dashed through the whole length of the city to the gates, compelling all the equipages which they met to rein up on the very sidewalks.

Merchants and passers-by who did not know them, and especially those who did, were filled with astonishment to see nobles of high rank in the midst of "the white day," dashing through the streets with intoxicated gipsies and gipsy girls singing at the tops of their voices.

When they reached the city limits, the troïkas stopped, and all the party took farewell of the count.

Ilyin, who had imbibed a good deal at the leave-taking, and had insisted on driving the horses, suddenly became melancholy, and began to urge the count to stay just one day more; but when he was assured that this was impossible, quite unexpectedly threw himself into his arms, and began to kiss his new friend, and promised him that as soon as he got to camp, he would petition

to be transferred into the regiment of hussars in which Turbin served.

The count was extraordinarily hilarious; he tipped into a snowdrift the cavalryman, who, since morning, had definitely taken to saying *thou* to him; he set Blücher on the ispravnik; he took Stioshka into his arms, and threatened to carry her off with him to Moscow; but at last he tucked himself into the sledge, and stationed Blücher by his side, who was always ready to ride. Sashka took his place on the box, after once more asking the cavalryman to secure the count's cloak from *them*, and to send it to him. The count cried "Go on,"[1] took off his cap, waved it over his head, and whistled in post-boy fashion to the horses. The troïkas parted company.

As far as the eye could see stretched a monotonous snow-covered plain, over which wound the yellowish muddy ribbon of the road.

The bright sunlight, dancing, glistened on the melting snow, which was covered with a thin transparent crust, and pleasantly warmed the face and back.

The steam arose from the sweaty horses. The bells jingled.

A muzhik with a creaking sledge, heavily loaded, slowly turned out of the road, twitching his hempen reins, and tramping through the slushy snow with his well-soaked linden-bark lapti.

A stout, handsome peasant woman, with a child wrapped in a sheepskin on her lap, who was seated on another load, used the end of her reins to whip up a white mangy-tailed old nag.

Suddenly the count remembered Anna Feodorovna.

"Back!" he cried.

The driver did not understand at first.

"Turn round and drive back; back to the city! Be quick about it."

The troïka again passed the city gate, and quickly drew up in front of the boarded steps of Mrs. Zaïtsof's dwelling.

[1] *Pashol.*

The count briskly mounted the steps, passed through the vestibule and the drawing-room, and, finding the widow still asleep, he took her in his arms, lifting her from her bed, and kissed her sleeping eyes again and again, and then darted back to the sledge.

Anna Feodorovna awoke from her slumber, and demanded, "What has happened?"

The count sprang into his sledge, shouted to the driver, and now no longer delaying, and thinking, not of Lukhnof, or of the little widow, or of Stioshka, but only of what was awaiting him in Moscow, rapidly left the city of K. behind him.

CHAPTER IX

A SCORE of years had passed. Much water had run since then, many men had died, many children had been born, many had grown up and become old; still more thoughts had been born and perished. Much that was beautiful and much that was ugly in the past had disappeared; much that was beautiful in the new had been brought forth, and still more that was incomplete and abortive of the new had appeared in God's world.

Count Feodor Turbin had long ago been killed in a duel with some foreigner whom he struck on the street with his long whip. His son, as like him as two drops of water, had already reached the age of two or three and twenty, and was a lovely fellow, already serving in the cavalry.

Morally the young Count Turbin was entirely different from his father. There was not a shadow of those fiery, passionate, and, in truth be it said, corrupt inclinations, peculiar to the last century.

Together with intelligence, cultivation, and inherited natural gifts, a love for the proprieties and amenities of life, a practical view of men and circumstances, wisdom and forethought, were his chief characteristics.

The young count made admirable progress in his profession; at twenty-three he was already lieutenant.

When war broke out, he came to the conclusion that it would be more for his interests to enter the regular army; and he joined a regiment of hussars as captain of cavalry, where he was soon given command of a battalion.

In the month of May, 1848, the S. regiment of hussars was on its way through the government of K., and the very battalion which the young Count Turbin commanded was obliged to be quartered for one night at Morozovka, Anna Feodorovna's village. Anna Feodorovna was still alive, but was now so far from being young that she no longer called herself young, which, for a woman, means much.

She had grown very stout, and this, it is said, makes a woman young. But this was not the worst of it; over her pallid, stout flesh was a network of coarse, flabby wrinkles. She no longer went to the city, she even found it hard to mount into her carriage; but still she was just as good-natured and as completely vacant-minded as ever, — the truth may be told, now that she no longer bribes it by her beauty.

Under her roof lived her daughter Liza, a rustic Russian belle of twenty-three summers, and her brother, our acquaintance the cavalryman, who had good-naturedly spent all his patrimony, and now, in his old age, had taken refuge with Anna Feodorovna.

The hair on his head had become perfectly gray; his upper lip was sunken, but the mustache that it wore was carefully dyed. Wrinkles covered not only his brow and cheeks, but also his nose and neck; and yet his weak bow-legs gave evidence of the old cavalryman.

Anna Feodorovna's whole family and household were gathered in the small drawing-room of the ancient house. The balcony door and windows, looking out into a star-shaped linden park, were open. The gray-haired Anna Feodorovna, in a lilac-colored gown,[1] was sitting on the divan, before a small round mahogany table, shuffling cards. The old brother, dressed in spruce white panta-

[1] *Katsaveĭka.*

loons and a blue coat, had taken up his position near the window, and was weaving a band of white paper with a fork, an occupation which his niece had taught him, and which gave him great enjoyment, as he had nothing else to do, his eyes not being strong enough to enable him to read newspapers, which was his favorite occupation. Near him Pimotchka, a *protégée* of Anna Feodorovna, was studying her lessons under the guidance of Liza, who, with wooden knitting-needles, was knitting goat-wool stockings for her uncle.

The last rays of the setting sun, as always at this time, threw under the linden alley their soft reflections on the last window-panes and the little *étagère* which stood near it.

In the garden it was so still that one could hear the swift rush of a swallow's wings, and so quiet in the room that Anna Feodorovna's gentle sigh, or the old man's cough as he kept changing the position of his legs, was the only sound.

"How does this go, Lizanka? show me, please. I keep forgetting," said Anna Feodorovna, pausing in the midst of her game of patience.

Liza, without stopping her work, went over to her mother, and, glancing at the cards, "Oh! you have mixed them all up, dear mamasha," said she, arranging the cards. "That is the way they should be placed. Now they come as you desired," she added, secretly withdrawing one card.

"Now you are always managing to deceive me! You said that it would go."

"No, truly; it goes, I assure you. It has come out right."

"Very well, then; very well, you rogue! But is n't it time for tea?"

"I have just ordered the samovar heated. I will go and see about it immediately. Shall we have it brought here?.... Now, Pimotchka, hasten and finish your lessons, and we will go and take a run."

And Liza started for the door.

"Lizotchka! Lizanka!" cried her uncle, steadfastly

regarding his fork, "it seems to me I have dropped another stitch. Arrange it for me, my darling."[1]

"In a moment, in a moment. First I must have the sugar broken up."

And in point of fact, within three minutes, she came running into the room, went up to her uncle, and took him by the ear.

"That's to pay you for dropping stitches," said she, laughing. "You have not been knitting as I taught you."

"Now, that'll do, that'll do, adjust it for me; there seems to be some sort of a knot."

Liza took the fork, pulled out a pin from her kerchief, which now, being loosened, was blown back a little by the breeze coming through the window, pretended to pick out a knot, and then, after taking a stitch or two, handed it back to her uncle.

"Now you must kiss me for that," said she, putting up her rosy cheek toward him, and readjusting her herchief. "You shall have rum in your tea to-day. To-day is Friday, you see."

And again she went to the tea-room.

"Uncle dear, come and look! some hussars are riding up toward the house!" her ringing voice was heard to say.

Anna Feodorovna and her brother hastened into the tea-room, the windows of which faced the village, and looked at the hussars. Very little was to be seen; through the cloud of dust it could be judged only that a body of men was advancing.

"What a pity, sister," remarked the uncle to Anna Feodorovna, "what a pity that we are so cramped, and the wing is not built yet, so that we might invite the officers here. Officers of the hussars! they are such glorious, gay young fellows! I should like to have a glimpse at them."

"Well, I should be heartily glad, but you know yourself that there is nowhere to put them; my sleeping-room, Liza's room, the parlor, and then your room,—

[1] *Galubchik.*

that's all there is. Where could we put them? Judge for yourself. Mikhaïlo Matveyef has put the village elder's house[1] in order for them; he says it will be nice there."

"But we must find you a husband, Lizotchka, among them, — a glorious hussar!" said the uncle.

"No, I do not want a hussar; I want a uhlan. Let me see, you served in the uhlans, didn't you, uncle? .... I don't care to know these hussars. They say they are all desperate fellows."

And Liza blushed a little, and then once more her ringing laugh was heard.

"Here's Ustiushka running; we must ask her what she saw," said she.

Anna Feodorovna sent to have Ustiushka brought in.

"She has no idea of sticking to her work, she must always be running off to look at the soldiers," said Anna Feodorovna. .... "Now, tell me, where have they lodged the officers?"

"With the Yeremkins, your ladyship. There are two of them, such lovely men! One of them is a count, they tell me."

"What's his name?"

"Kazarof or Turbinof. I don't remember, excuse me."

"There now, you're a goose, you don't know how to tell anything at all. You might have remembered his name!"

"Well, I'll run and find out."

"I know that you are quite able to do that. But no, let Danilo go. — Brother, go and tell him to go; have him ask if there is not something which the officers may need; everything must be done in good form; have them understand that it is the lady of the house who has sent to find out."

The old people sat down again in the tea-room, and Liza went to the servants' room to put the lumps of sugar in the sugar-bowl. Ustiushka was there telling about the hussars.

[1] *Starostina izba.*

"Oh, my dear young lady, what a handsome man he is! that count!" she said, "absolutely a little cherubim,[1] with black eyebrows. You ought to have such a husband as that; what a lovely little couple you would make!"

The other maids smiled approvingly; the old nurse, sitting by the window with her stocking, sighed, and drawing a long breath, murmured a prayer.

"It seems to me that the hussars have given you a great deal of pleasure," said Liza. "You are a master hand at description. Bring me the mors,[2] Ustiushka, please; we must give the officers something sour to drink."

And Liza, laughing, went out with the sugar-bowl.

"But I should like to see what sort of a man this hussar is," she said to herself, — "whether he is brunette or blond. And I imagine he would not object to making our acquaintance. But he will go away, and never know that I was here and was thinking about him. And how many have passed by me in this way! No one ever sees me except uncle and Ustiusha! How many times I have arranged my hair, how many pairs of cuffs I have put on, and yet no one ever sees me or falls in love with me," she thought, with a sigh, contemplating her white, plump arm.

"He must be tall, and have big eyes, and a nice little black mustache..... No! I am already over twenty-two, and no one has ever fallen in love with me except the pock-marked Ivan Ipatuitch. And four years ago I was still better-looking; and so my girlhood has gone, and no one is the better for it. Ah! I am a wretched, wretched country girl!"

Her mother's voice, calling her to pour the tea, aroused the country girl from this momentary reverie.

She shook her little head, and went into the tea-room.

The best things always happen unexpectedly; and the more you try to force them, the worse they come out. In the country, it is rare that any attempt is made

[1] *Kherubimchik.*

[2] A sour beverage made of cranberries.

to impart education, and therefore when a good one is found it is generally a surprise. And thus it happened, in a notable degree, in the case of Liza.

Anna Feodorovna, through her own lack of intelligence and natural laziness, had not given Liza any education at all; had not taught her music or the French language which is so indispensable. But the girl whom she had unexpectedly had by her late husband, had proved to be a healthy, bright little child; she had intrusted her to a wet-nurse and a day-nurse; she had fed her, and dressed her in print dresses and goatskin shoes, and let her run wild and gather mushrooms and berries; had her taught reading and arithmetic by a resident seminarist. And thus, as fate would have it, when her daughter had reached the age of sixteen, she found in her a companion, a soul who was always cheerful and good-natured and the actual mistress of the house.

Through her goodness of heart, Anna Feodorovna always had in her house some *protégée*, either a serf or some foundling. Liza, from the time she was ten years old, had begun to take care of these; to teach them, clothe them, take them to church, and keep them still when they were inclined to be mischievous.

Then her old broken-down but good-natured uncle made his appearance, and he had to be taken care of like a child. Then the domestic servants and the peasants began to come to the young mistress with their desires and their ailments; and she treated them with elderberry, mint, and spirits of camphor. Then the domestic management of the house fell into her hands entirely. Then came the unsatisfied craving for love, which found expression only in nature and religion.

Thus Liza, by chance, grew into an active, good-naturedly cheerful, self-poised, pure, and deeply religious young woman.

To be sure, she had her little fits of jealousy and envy when she saw, all around her in church, her neighbors dressed in new, fashionable hats which came from K.; she was sometimes vexed to tears by her old,

irritable mother, and her caprices; she had her dreams of love in the most absurd and even the crudest forms, but her healthy activity, which she could not shirk, drove them away; and now, at twenty-two, not a single spot, not a single compunction, had touched the fresh, calm soul of this maiden, now developed into the fullness of perfect physical and moral beauty.

Liza was of medium height, rather plump than lean; her eyes were brown, small, with a soft dark shade on the lower lid; she wore her flaxen hair in a long braid.

In walking she took long steps, and swayed like a duck, as the saying is.

The expression of her face, when she was occupied with her duties, and nothing especially disturbed her, seemed to say to all who looked into it, "Life in this world is good and pleasant to one who has a heart full of love, and a pure conscience."

Even in moments of vexation, of trouble, of unrest, or of melancholy, in spite of her tears, of the drawing-down of the left brow, of the compressed lips, of the petulance of her desires, even then in the dimples of her cheeks, in the corners of her mouth, and in her brilliant eyes, so used to smile and rejoice in life, — even then there shone a heart good and upright, and unspoiled by knowledge.

CHAPTER X

It was still rather warm, though the sun was already set, when the battalion arrived at Morozovka. In front of them, along the dusty village street, trotted a brindled cow, separated from the herd, bellowing, and occasionally stopping to look round, and never once perceiving that all she had to do was to turn out and let the battalion pass.

Peasants, old men, women, children, and domestic serfs, crowding both sides of the road, gazed curiously at the hussars.

Through a thick cloud of dust the hussars rode

along on raven-black horses, curveting and occasionally snorting.

At the right of the battalion, gracefully mounted on beautiful black steeds, rode two officers. One was the commander, Count Turbin; the other a very young man, who had recently been promoted from the yunkers; his name was Polozof.

A hussar, in a white kitel, came from the best of the cottages, and, taking off his cap, approached the officers.

"What quarters have been assigned to us?" asked the count.

"For your excellency?" replied the quartermaster, his whole body shuddering. "Here at the starosta's; I have put his cottage in order. I tried to get a room at the mansion,[1] but they said no; the proprietress is so ill-tempered."

"Well, all right," said the count, dismounting and stretching his legs as he reached the starosta's cottage. "Tell me, has my carriage come?"

"It has deigned to arrive, your excellency," replied the quartermaster, indicating with his cap the leathern carriage-top which was to be seen inside the gate, and then hastening ahead into the entry of the cottage, which was crowded with the family of serfs, gathered to have a look at the officer.

He even tripped over an old woman, as he hastily opened the door of the neatly cleaned cottage, and stood aside to let the count pass.

The cottage was large and commodious, but not perfectly clean. The German body-servant, dressed like a gentleman,[2] was standing in the cottage, and, having just finished setting up the iron bed, was taking out clean linen from a trunk.

"Phu! what a nasty lodging!" exclaimed the count, in vexation. "Diadenko! Is it impossible to find me better quarters at the proprietor's or somewhere?"

"If your excellency command, I will go up to the mansion," replied Diadenko; "but the house is small

[1] *Barsky dvor.* [2] *Barin.*

and wretched, and seems not much better than the cottage."

"Well, that 's all now. You can go."

And the count threw himself down on the bed, supporting his head with his hands.

"Johann!" he cried to his body-servant; "again you have made a hump in the middle. Why can't you learn to make a bed decently?"

Johann wanted to make it over again.

"No, you need not trouble about it now!.... Where's my khalat?" he asked, in a petulant voice. The servant gave him the garment.

The count, before he put it on, examined the skirt. "There it is! You have not taken that spot out! Could it be possible for any one to be a worse servant than you are?" he added, snatching the khalat from the servant's hands and putting it on. "Now tell me, do you do this way on purpose?.... Is tea ready?"....

"I have n't had time to make it," replied Johann.

"Durak.... fool!"

After this, the count took a French novel which was at hand, and read for some time without speaking; but Johann went out into the entry to blow up the coals in the samovar.

It was plain to see that the count was in a bad humor; it must have been owing to weariness, to the dust on his face, to his tightly fitting clothes, and to his empty stomach.

"Johann!" he cried again, "give me an account of those ten rubles. What did you get in town?"

The count looked over the account which the servant handed him, and made some dissatisfied remarks about the high prices paid.

"Give me the rum for the tea."

"I did not get any rum," said Johann.

"Delightful! How many times have I told you always to have rum?"

"I did n't have money enough."

"Why did n't Polozof buy it? You might have got some from his man."

"The cornet Polozof? I do not know. He bought tea and sugar."

"Beast!.... Get you gone..... You are the only man who has the power to exhaust my patience! You know that I always take rum in my tea when I am on the march."

"Here are two letters brought for you from headquarters," said the body-servant.

The count, as he lay on the bed, tore open the letters, and proceeded to read them. At this moment the cornet came in with gay countenance, having quartered the battalion.

"Well, how is it, Turbin? It's first-rate here, it seems to me. I am tired out, I confess it. It has been a warm day."

"First-rate! I should think so! A dirty, stinking hut! and no rum, thanks to you. Your stupid did not buy any, nor this one either. You might have said something, anyway!"

And he went on with his reading. After he had read the letter through, he crumpled it up, and threw it on the floor.

"*Why* didn't you buy some rum?" the cornet in a whisper demanded of his servant in the entry. "Didn't you have any money?"

"Well, why should we be always the ones to spend the money? I have enough to spend for without that, and *his* German does nothing but smoke his pipe,— that's all."

The second letter was evidently not disagreeable, because the count smiled as he read it.

"Who's that from?" asked Polozof, returning to the room, and trying to arrange for himself a couch on the floor near the oven.

"From Mina," replied the count, gayly, handing him the letter. "Would you like to read it? What a lovely woman she is!.... Now, she's better than our fine young ladies, that's a fact..... Just see what feeling and what wit in that letter! There's only one thing that I don't like,— she asks me for money!"

"No, that's not pleasant," replied the cornet.

"Well, it's true I promised to give her some; but this expedition .... and besides, if I am commander of the battalion, at the end of three months I will send some to her. I should not regret it; she's really a charmer! Is n't she?" he asked, with a smile, following with his eyes Polozof's expression as he read the letter.

"Horribly illiterate, but sweet; it seems to me she really loves you," replied the cornet.

"Hm! I should think so! Only these women truly love when they do love."

"But who was the other from?" asked the cornet, handing back the letter which he had just read.

"That? Oh, that's from a certain man, very ugly, to whom I owe a gambling debt, and this is the third time he's reminded me of it.... I can't pay it to him now.... It's a stupid letter," replied the count, evidently nettled by the recollection of it.

The two officers remained silent for some little time. The cornet, who, it seemed, had come under Turbin's influence, drank his tea without speaking, though he occasionally cast a glance at the clouded face of the handsome count, who gazed steadily out of the window. He did not venture to renew the conversation.

"Well, then, I think it can be accomplished without difficulty," suddenly exclaimed the count, turning to Polozof, and gayly nodding his head. "If we who are in the line get promoted this year, yes, and if we take part in some engagement, then I can overtake my former captains of the guard."

They were still talking on this theme over their second glass of tea, when the old Danilo came with the message from Anna Feodorovna.

"And she would also like to know whether you are not pleased to be the son of Count Feodor Ivanovitch Turbin," Danilo added, on his own responsibility, as he had found out the officer's name, and still remembered the late count's visit to the city of K. "Our mistress,[1] Anna Feodorovna, used to be very well acquainted with him."

[1] *Baruinya.*

"He was my father. Now tell the lady that I am very much obliged, but that I need nothing; only, if it would not be possible to give me a cleaner room in the mansion, say, or somewhere."

"Now, why did you do that?" asked Polozof, after Danilo had gone. "Is n't it just the same thing? For one night is n't it just as well here? And it will put them to inconvenience."

"There it is again! It seems to me we have had enough of being sent round among these smoky hovels.[1] .... It 's easy enough to see that you are not a practical man. .... Why should n't we seize the opportunity of sleeping when we can, like decent men, even if it 's for only one night? And they, contrary to what you think, will be awfully glad. There 's only one thing objectionable. If this lady used to know my father," continued the count, with a smile which discovered his white gleaming teeth, — "somehow I always feel a little ashamed of my late papasha; there 's always some scandalous story, or some debt or other. And so I can't endure to meet any of my father's acquaintances. However, that was an entirely different age," he added seriously.

"Oh! I did not tell you," rejoined Polozof. "I recently met Ilyin, the brigade commander of uhlans. He is very desirous of seeing you; he is passionately fond of your father."

"I think that he is terrible trash, that Ilyin. But the worst is that all these gentlemen who imagine that they knew my father in order to make friends with me, insist upon telling me, as if it were very pleasant for me to hear, about escapades of his which make me blush. It is true I am not impulsive, and I look on things dispassionately; while he was too hot-spirited a man, and sometimes he played exceedingly reprehensible tricks. However, that was all due to his time. In our day and generation, maybe, he would have been a very sensible man, for he had tremendous abilities; one must give him credit for that."

[1] *Kurnaya izba*, a peasant's hut without chimney.

In a quarter of an hour the servant returned, and brought an invitation for them to come and spend the night at the mansion.

CHAPTER XI

As soon as Anna Feodorovna learned that the officer of hussars was the son of Count Feodor Turbin, she was thrown into a great state of excitement.

"Oh! great heavens![1] he is my darling!.... Danilo! run, hurry, tell them the lady invites them to stay at her house," she cried, in great agitation, and hastening to the servants' room. "Lizanka! Ustiushka! You must have your room put in order, Liza. You can go into your uncle's room; and you, brother.... brother, you can sleep to-night in the drawing-room. It's for only one night."

"That's nothing, sister! I would sleep on the floor."

"He must be a handsome fellow, I think, if he's like his father. Only let me see him, the turtle-dove!.... You shall see for yourself, Liza. Ah! his father was handsome!.... Where shall we put the table? Let it go there," said Anna Feodorovna, fidgeting about. "There now, bring in two beds; take one from the overseer's, and get from the *étagère* the glass candlestick which my brother gave me for my birthday, and put in a wax candle."

At last all was ready. Liza, in spite of her mother's interference, arranged her room in her own way for the two officers.

She brought out clean linen sheets, fragrant of mignonette, and had the beds made; she ordered a carafe of water, and candles to be placed near it on the little table. She burned scented paper in the girls' room, and moved her own little bed into her uncle's chamber.

Anna Feodorovna gradually became calm, and sat

[1] *Batyushki moï!*

down again in her usual place; she even took out her cards; but, instead of shuffling them, she leaned on her fat elbow, and gave herself up to her thoughts.

"How time has gone! how time has gone!" she exclaimed, in a whisper. "It is long! long! is n't it? I seem to see him now! Oh! he was a scamp!" — And the tears came into her eyes. — "Now here is Lizanka, but she is n't at all what I was at her age. She is a nice girl; but no, not quite ....

"Lizanka, you had better wear your mousseline-de-laine dress this evening."

"Why, are you going to invite them down-stairs, mamasha? You had better not do it," rejoined Liza, with a feeling of invincible agitation at the thought of seeing the officers. "You had better not, mamasha!"

In point of fact, much as she desired to see them, she felt even more apprehensive of some painful pleasure awaiting her, as it seemed to her.

"Perhaps they themselves would like to make our acquaintance, Lizotchka," said Anna Feodorovna, smoothing her daughter's hair, and at the same time thinking, "No, not such hair as I had at her age. No, Lizotchka, how much I could wish for you that...."

And she really wished something very excellent for her daughter, but she could scarcely look forward to a match with the count; she could not desire such a relationship as she herself had formed with his father; but that something good would come of it, she wished very, very much for her daughter. She possibly had the desire to live over again in her daughter's happiness all the life which she lived with the late lamented.

The old cavalryman was also somewhat excited by the count's coming. He went to his room, and shut himself up in it. At the end of a quarter of an hour, he reappeared dressed in a Hungarian coat and blue pantaloons; and, with anxiously happy expression of countenance, such as a girl wears when she puts on her first ball-gown, he started for the room assigned to the guests.

"I shall have a glimpse of some of the hussars of

to-day, sister. The late count was indeed a genuine hussar. We shall see! we shall see!"

The officers had by this time come in by the back entrance, and were in the room that had been put at their service.

"There, now," said the count, stretching himself out in his dusty boots on the bed which had just been made for him, "see how much better off we are here than we were there in that hovel with the cockroaches!"

"Better? of course; but think what obligations we are putting ourselves under to the people here."....

"What rubbish! One must always be a practical man. They are awfully glad to have us, of course.... Fellow!" cried the count, "ask some one to put a curtain up at this window, else there 'll be a draught in the night."

Just at this moment the old man came in to make the acquaintance of the officers. Though he grew rather red in the face, of course, he did not fail to tell how he had been a comrade of the late count's, how he had enjoyed his society, and he even went so far as to say that more than once he had been under obligations to the late count. Whether he meant, in speaking of the obligations to the late count, a reference to the hundred rubles which the count had borrowed and never returned, or to his throwing him into the snowdrift, or to his grossly insulting him, the old man entirely failed to explain.

However, the count was very urbane with the old cavalryman, and thanked him for his hospitality.

"You must excuse us if it is not very luxurious, count," — he almost said "your excellency," as he had got out of the habit of meeting with men of rank. "My sister's house is rather small. As for the window here, we will immediately find something to serve as a curtain, and it will be first-rate," added the little old man; and, under the pretext of going for a curtain, but chiefly because he wanted to give his report about the officers as quickly as possible, he left the room.

The pretty little Ustiusha came, bringing her mistress's shawl to serve as a curtain. She was also com-

missioned to ask if the gentlemen would not like some tea.

This pleasant hospitality had a manifestly beneficent influence on the count's spirits. He laughed gayly, and jested with Ustiusha so that she even called him a bad man; he asked her if her mistress was pretty, and in reply to her question whether he would like some tea, declared that she might please bring him some, but above all, as his supper was not ready, he would like some vodka now, a bite of something to eat, and some sherry if there was any.

The old uncle was in raptures over the young count's politeness, and praised to the skies the young generation of officers, saying that the men of the present day were incomparably superior to those of the past.

Anna Feodorovna could not agree to that, — no one could be any better than Count Feodor Ivanovitch, — and she was beginning to grow seriously angry, and remarked dryly: —

"For you, brother, the one who flatters you last is the best! Without any question, the men of our time are better educated; but still Feodor Ivanovitch could dance the schottische, and was so amiable that everybody in his day, you might say, was crazy over him! only he did not care for any one except me. Oh, certainly there were fine men in the old time!"

At this moment came the message requesting the vodka, the lunch, and the sherry.

"There now, just like you, brother! You never do things right. We ought to have ordered supper. .... Liza, attend to it, that 's a darling."

Liza hastened to the storeroom for mushrooms and fresh cream butter, and told the cook to prepare beef cutlets.

"How much sherry is there? Have n't you any left, brother?"

"No, sister, I have not had any."

"What! no sherry? but what is it you drink in your tea?"

"That is rum, Anna Feodorovna."

"Is n't that the same thing? Give them some of that. It is all the same, rum! Or would it not be better to invite them down here, brother? You know all about it. They would not be offended, I imagine, would they?"

The cavalryman assured her that he would answer for it that the count, in his goodness of heart, would not decline, and that he would certainly bring them.

Anna Feodorovna went off to put on, for some unknown reason, her grosgrain gown and a new cap; but Liza was so busy that she had no time to take off her pink gingham frock with wide sleeves. Moreover, she was terribly wrought up; it seemed to her that something astonishing, like a very low black cloud, was sweeping down on her soul.

This count-hussar, this handsome fellow, she imagined as an absolutely novel and to her incomprehensible but beautiful creature. His character, his habits, his words, it seemed to her, must be something extraordinary, such as had never come into the range of her experience. All that he thought and said must be wise and true; all that he did must be honorable; his whole appearance must be beautiful. She could have no doubt of that. If he had demanded not merely a lunch and sherry, but even a bath in spirits of salvia, she would not have been surprised, she would not have blamed him, and she would have been convinced that this was just and reasonable.

The count immediately accepted when the cavalryman brought him his sister's invitation; he combed his hair, put on his coat, and took his cigar-case.

"Let us come!" he said to Polozof.

"Indeed, we had better not go," replied the cornet; "*ils feront des frais pour nous recevoir.*"

"Rubbish! it will make them happy. Besides, I have been making inquiries .... there 's a pretty daughter here..... Come along," said the count in French.

"*Je vous en prie, messieurs,*" said the cavalryman, merely for the sake of giving them to understand that he also could speak French, and understood what the officers were saying.

CHAPTER XII

Liza, red in the face and with downcast eyes, was ostensibly occupied with filling up the teapot, and did not dare to look at the officers as they entered the room.

Anna Feodorovna, on the contrary, briskly jumped up and bowed, and, without taking her eyes from the count's face, began to talk to him, now finding an extraordinary resemblance to his father, now presenting her daughter, now offering him tea, preserves, or jelly-cakes.

No one paid any attention to the cornet, owing to his modest appearance; and he was very glad of it, because it gave him a chance, within the limits of propriety, to observe and study the details of Liza's beauty, which had evidently come over him with the force of a surprise.

The uncle, listening to his sister's conversation, had a speech ready on his lips, and was waiting for a chance to relate his cavalry experiences.

The count smoked his cigar over his tea, so that Liza had great difficulty in refraining from coughing, but he was very talkative and amiable; at first, in the pauses of Anna Feodorovna's interminable speeches, he introduced his own anecdotes, and finally he took the conversation into his own hands.

One thing struck his listeners as rather strange: in his talk he often used words which, though not considered reprehensible in his own set, were here rather audacious, so that Anna Feodorovna was somewhat abashed, and Liza blushed to her ears. But the count did not notice this, and continued to be just as natural and amiable as ever.

Liza filled the glasses in silence, not putting them into the hands of the guests, but setting them down near them; she had not entirely recovered from her agitation, but listened eagerly to what the count was saying.

His tales, which were not characterized by wit or cleverness, and the hesitancies in the conversation, grad-

ually reassured her. The very bright things she had expected from him were not forthcoming, nor did she discover any of that surpassing elegance which she had confusedly hoped to find in him. Even over the third glass of tea, when her timid eyes once encountered his, and he did not avoid them, but continued almost too boldly to stare at her, with a lurking smile, she became conscious of a certain feeling of hostility against him; and she soon discovered that there was not only nothing out of the ordinary in him, but that he was very little different from those whom she had already seen, so that there was no reason to be afraid of him. Except that he had long and neat finger-nails, there was no mark of special beauty about him.

Liza suddenly, not without some inward sorrow, renouncing her dream, regained her self-possession; and only the undemonstrative cornet's eyes, which she felt fixed upon her, disquieted her.

"Perhaps it is not the count, but the other," she said to herself.

CHAPTER XIII

After tea, the old lady invited her guests into the other room, and again sat down in her usual place.

"But perhaps you would like to rest, count?" she asked. "Well, then, what will you amuse yourselves with, my dear guests?" she proceeded to ask, after she had been assured to the contrary. "Do you play cards, count?—Here, brother, you might take a hand in some game or other."....

"Why, you yourself can play *préférence*," replied the cavalryman. "You had better take a hand, then. Count, will you play? And you?"

The officers were agreeable to everything that might satisfy their amiable hosts.

Liza brought from her room her old cards which she used for divining whether her mother would speedily recover of a cold, or whether her uncle would return on

such and such a day from the city if he chanced to have gone there, or whether her neighbor would be in during the day, and other like things. These cards, though they had been in use for two months, were less soiled than those which Anna Feodorovna used for the same purpose.

"Perhaps you are not accustomed to playing for small stakes," suggested the uncle. "Anna Feodorovna and I play for half-kopeks, ... and then she always gets the better of all of us."

"Oh! make your own arrangements. I shall be perfectly satisfied," said the count.

"Well, then, be it in paper kopeks for the sake of our dear guests; only let me gain, as I am an old woman," said Anna Feodorovna, settling herself in her chair, and adjusting her mantilla.

"Maybe I shall win a ruble of them," thought Anna Feodorovna, who in her old age felt a little passion for cards.

"If you would like, I will teach you to play with tablets," said the count, "and with the *miseries*. It is very jolly."

They were all delighted with this new Petersburg fashion. The uncle went so far as to assert that he knew it, and that it was just the same thing as boston, but that he had forgotten somewhat about it.

Anna Feodorovna did not comprehend it at all; and it took her so long to get into it, that she felt under the necessity of smiling and nodding her head assuringly, to give the impression that she now understood, and that it was all perfectly clear to her. But there was no little amusement created when in the midst of the game Anna Feodorovna, with ace and king blank, called "misery," and remained with the six. She even began to grow confused, smiled timidly, and hastened to assure them that she had not as yet become accustomed to the new way.

Nevertheless they put down the points against her, and many of them too; the more because the count, through his practice of playing on large stakes, played

carefully, led very prudently, and entirely ignored what the cornet meant by various thumps with his foot under the table, or why he made such stupid blunders in playing.

Liza brought in more jelly-cakes, three kinds of preserves, and large apples cooked in a peculiar way; and then, standing behind her mother's chair, she looked on at the game, and occasionally watched the officers, and especially the count's white hands with their delicate long pink nails, as he, with such skill, assurance, and grace, threw the cards, and took the tricks.

Once more Anna Feodorovna, with some show of temper, going beyond the others, bid as high as seven, and lost three points; and when, at her brother's instigation, she set some wild figure, she was utterly lost and flustered.

"It's nothing, mamasha; you'll win it back again," said Liza, with a smile, anxious to rescue her mother from her ridiculous position. "Sometime you'll put a fine on uncle; then he will be caught."

"But you might help me, Lizotchka," cried Anna Feodorovna, looking with an expression of dismay at her daughter; "I don't know how this...."

"But I don't know how to play this either," rejoined Liza, mentally calculating her mother's losses. "But if you go on at this rate, mamasha, you will lose a good deal, and Pimotchka will not have her new gown," she added in jest.

"Yes, in this way it is quite possible to lose ten silver rubles," said the cornet, looking at Liza, and wishing to draw her into conversation.

"Aren't we playing for paper money?" asked Anna Feodorovna, gazing round at the others.

"I don't know, I am sure," replied the count. "But I don't know how to reckon in bank-notes. What are they? what do you mean by bank-notes?"[1]

"Why, no one nowadays reckons in bank-notes," explained the cavalryman, who was playing like a hero and was on the winning side.

[1] *Assignatsii.*

The old lady ordered some sparkling beverage called *shiputchki*, drank two glasses herself, grew quite flushed, and seemed to abandon all hope. One braid of her gray hair escaped from under her cap, and she did not even put it up. It was evident that she thought herself losing millions, and that she was entirely ruined. The cornet kept nudging the count's leg more and more emphatically. The count was noting down the old lady's losses.

At last the game came to an end. In spite of Anna Feodorovna's efforts to bring her reckoning higher than it should be, and to pretend that she had been cheated in her account, and that it could not be correct, in spite of her dismay at the magnitude of her losses, at last when the account was made out, she was found to have lost nine hundred and twenty points.

"Is n't that equal to nine paper rubles?" she asked again and again; and she did not begin to realize how great her forfeit was, until her brother, to her horror, explained that she was "out" thirty-two and a half paper rubles, and that it was absolutely necessary for her to pay it.

The count did not even sum up his gains, but, as soon as the game was over, arose and went over to the window where Liza was arranging the zakushka, and putting potted mushrooms on a plate for their supper. There he did with perfect calmness and naturalness what the cornet had been anxious and yet unable to effect all the evening, — he engaged her in conversation about the weather.

The cornet at this time was brought into a thoroughly unpleasant predicament. Anna Feodorovna, in the absence of the count and Liza, who had managed to keep her in a jovial frame of mind, became really angry.

"Indeed, it is too bad that we have caused you to lose so heavily," said Polozof, in order to say something. "It is simply shameful."

"I should think these tablets and *miseries* were something of your own invention. I don't know anything about them. How many paper rubles does the whole amount to?" she demanded.

"Thirty-two rubles, thirty-two and a half," insisted the cavalryman, who, from the effect of having been on the winning side, was in a very waggish frame of mind. "Give him the money, sister. .... Give it to him."

"I will give all I owe, only you must not ask for any more. No, I shall never win it back in my life."

And Anna Feodorovna went to her room, all in excitement, hurried back, and brought nine paper rubles. Only on the old man's strenuous insistence she was induced to pay the whole sum.

Polozof had some fear that the old lady would pour out on him the vials of her wrath if he entered into conversation with her. He silently, without attracting attention, turned away, and rejoined the count and Liza, who were talking at the open window.

On the table, which was now spread for the supper, stood two tallow candles, the flames of which occasionally flared in the gentle breeze of the mild May night. Through the window, opening into the garden, came a very different light from that which filled the room. The moon, almost at its full, already beginning to lose its golden radiance, was pouring over the tops of the lofty lindens, and making brighter and brighter the delicate fleecy clouds that occasionally overcast it.

From the pond, the surface of which, silvered in one place by the moon, could be seen through the trees, came the voices of the frogs. In the sweet-scented lilac bush under the very window, which from time to time slowly shook its heavy-laden blossoms, birds were darting and fluttering.

"What marvelous weather!" said the count, as he joined Liza, and sat down on the low window-seat. "I suppose you go to walk a good deal, don't you?"

"Yes," rejoined Liza, not experiencing the slightest embarrassment in the count's company. "Every morning, at seven o'clock, I make the tour of the estate, and sometimes I take a walk with Pimotchka, — mamma's *protégée*."

"It 's pleasant living in the country," cried the count, putting his monocle to his eye, and gazing first at the

garden, and then at Liza. "But don't you like to take a walk on moonlight nights?"

"No. Three years ago my uncle and I used to go out walking every moonlight night. He had some sort of strange illness, — insomnia. Whenever there was a full moon, he could not sleep. His room, you see, opens into the garden, and the window is low. The moon shines right into it."

"Strange," remarked the count. "Then this is your room."

"No, I only sleep there for this one night. You occupy my room."

"Is it possible?.... oh, good heavens![1] I shall never in the world forgive myself for the trouble that I have caused," said the count, casting the monocle from his eye as a sign of sincerity..... "If I had only known that I was going to...."

"How much trouble was it? On the contrary, I am very glad. My uncle's room is so nice and jolly; there 's a low window there. I shall sit down in it before I go to bed, or perhaps I shall go down, out into the garden, and take a little walk."

"What a glorious girl!" said the count to himself, replacing the monocle, and staring at her, and while pretending to change his seat in the window, trying to touch her foot with his. "And how shrewdly she gave me to understand that I may meet her in the garden at the window, if I wish!"

Liza even lost in the count's eyes a large share of her charm, so easy did the conquest of her seem to him.

"And how blissful it must be," said the count, dreamily, gazing into the shadow-haunted alley, "to spend such a night in the garden, with the object of one's love!"

Liza was somewhat abashed by these words, and by a second unexpected pressure upon her foot. Before she thought, she made some remark for the sake of dissimulating her embarrassment.

She said, "Yes, it is splendid to walk in the moonlight."

[1] *Okh! Bozhe moï!*

There was something disagreeable about the whole conversation. She put the cover on the jar from which she had been taking the mushrooms, and was just turning from the window, when the cornet came toward her, and she felt a curiosity to know what kind of a man he was.

"What a lovely night!" said he.

"They can only talk about the weather," thought Liza.

"What a wonderful view!" continued the cornet, "only I should think it would be tiresome," he added, through a strange propensity, peculiar to him, of saying things sure to offend the people who pleased him very much.

"Why should you think so? Always the same cooking and always the same gown might become tiresome; but a lovely garden can never be tiresome when you enjoy walking, and especially when there's a moon rising higher and higher. From my uncle's room you can see the whole pond. I shall see it from there to-night."

"And you have n't any nightingales at all, have you?" asked the count, very much put out because Polozof had come and prevented him from learning the exact conditions of the rendezvous.

"Oh, yes, we always have them; last year the hunters caught one; and only last week one was singing beautifully, but the district inspector[1] came along with his bells, and scared him away. Three years ago my uncle and I used to sit out in the covered alley, and listen to one for two hours at a time."

"What is this chatterbox telling you about?" inquired the old uncle, joining the trio. "Are n't you ready for something to eat?"

At supper, the count, by his reiterated praise of the viands, and by his appetite, succeeded in bringing his hostess into a somewhat happier frame of mind. Afterward the officers made their adieux, and went to their room. The count shook hands with the old cavalier,

[1] *Stanovoï.*

and, to Anna Feodorovna's surprise, with her, without offering to kiss her hand; and he also shook hands with Liza, at the same time looking straight into her eyes and craftily smiling his pleasing smile. This glance again somewhat disconcerted the maiden.

"He is very handsome," she said to herself, "only he is quite too conceited."

CHAPTER XIV

"WELL, now, aren't you ashamed?" exclaimed Polozof, when the two officers had returned to their chamber. "I tried to lose, and I kept nudging you under the table. Now doesn't your conscience prick you? The poor old lady was quite beside herself."

The count burst into a terrible fit of laughter.

"A most comical dame! How abused she felt!"

And again he began to laugh so heartily that even Johann, who was standing in front of him, cast down his eyes to conceal a smile.

"And here is the son of an old family friend! Ha, ha, ha!" continued the count, in a gale of laughter.

"No, indeed, it is not right. I felt really sorry for her," said the cornet.

"What rubbish! How young you are! What! did you think I was going to lose? Why should I lose? I only lose when I don't know any better. Ten rubles, brother, will come in handy. You must look on life in a practical way, or else you will always be a fool."

Polozof said nothing more: in the first place, he wanted to think by himself about Liza, who seemed to him to be an extraordinarily pure and beautiful creature.

He undressed, and lay down on the clean, soft bed which had been made ready for him.

"How absurd all these honors and the glory of war!" he thought to himself, gazing at the window shaded by the shawl, through the interstices of which crept the

pale rays of the moon. "Here is happiness — to live in a quiet nook, with a gentle, bright, simple-hearted wife; that is enduring, true happiness."

But somehow he did not communicate these imaginations to his friend; and he did not even speak of the rustic maiden, though he felt sure that the count was also thinking about her.

"Why don't you undress?" he asked the count, who was walking up and down the room.

"Oh, I don't feel like sleeping! Put out the candle if you like," said he. "I can undress in the dark."

And he continued to walk back and forth.

"He does not feel sleepy," repeated Polozof, who after the evening's experiences felt more than ever dissatisfied with the count's influence on him, and disposed to revolt against it. "I imagine," he reasoned, mentally addressing Turbin, "what thoughts are now trooping through that well-combed head of yours. And I saw how she pleased you. But you are not the kind to appreciate that simple-hearted, pure-minded creature. Mina is the one for you; you want the epaulets of a colonel. Indeed, I have a mind to ask him how he liked her."

And Polozof was about to address him, but he hesitated; he felt that not only he was not in the right frame of mind to discuss with him if the count's views of Liza were what he interpreted them to be, but that he should not have the force of mind necessary for him to disagree with him, so accustomed was he to submit to an influence which for him grew each day more burdensome and unrighteous.

"Where are you going?" he asked, as the count took his cap and went to the door.

"I am going to the stable; I wish to see if everything is all right."

"Strange!" thought the cornet; but he blew out the candle, and, trying to dispel the absurdly jealous and hostile thoughts that arose against his former friend, he turned over on the other side.

Anna Feodorovna, meantime, having crossed herself

as usual, and kissed her brother, her daughter, and her *protégée* affectionately, also retired to her room.

Long had it been since the old lady had experienced in a single day such powerful sensations. She could not even say her prayers in tranquillity; all the melancholy but vivid remembrances of the late count, and of this young dandy who had so ruthlessly taken advantage of her, kept coming up in her mind.

Nevertheless, she undressed as usual, and drank a half-glass of kvas which stood ready on the little table near the bed, and lay down. Her beloved cat came softly into the room. Anna Feodorovna called her, and began to stroke her fur, and listen to her purring; but still she could not go to sleep.

"It is the cat that disturbs me," she said to herself, and pushed her away. The cat fell to the floor softly, and, slowly waving her bushy tail, got up on the oven;[1] and then the maid, who slept in the room on the floor, brought her felt and spread it down, put out the candle, and lighted the night-lamp.

At last the maid began to snore; but sleep still refused to come to Anna Feodorovna, and calm her excited imagination. The face of the hussar kept arising before her mental vision, when she shut her eyes; and it seemed to her that it appeared in various strange guises in her room, when she opened her eyes and looked at the commode, at the table, and her white raiment hanging up in the feeble light of the night-lamp. Then it seemed hot to her in the feather-bed, and the ticking of the watch on the table became unendurable; exasperating to the last degree, the snoring of the maid. She wakened her, and bade her cease snoring.

Again the thoughts of her daughter, the old count, and of the young count, and of the game of *préférence*, became strangely mixed in her mind. Now she seemed to see herself waltzing with the former count; she saw her own plump, white shoulders, she felt on them some one's kisses, and then she saw her daughter in the young count's embrace.

[1] The *lezhanka*, a part of the oven built out as a sort of couch.

Once more Ustiushka began to snore. ....

"No, it 's somehow different now, the men are n't the same. *He* was ready to fling himself into the fire for my sake. Yes, I was worth doing it for! But this one, have no fear, is sound asleep like a goose,[1] happy because he won the game, and with never a thought of wooing. How his father fell on his knees, and said, 'Whatever you desire I will do; I would kill myself in a moment for you; what do you desire?' And he would have killed himself, if I had bade him!" ....

Suddenly the sound of bare feet was heard in the corridor; and Liza, with a handkerchief thrown over her head, came in, pale and trembling, and almost fell on her mother's bed. ....

After saying good-night to her mother, Liza had gone alone to the room that had been her uncle's. Putting on a white jacket, throwing a handkerchief round her thick, long braids, she put out the light, opened the window, and curled up in a chair, turning her dreamy eyes to the pond, which was now all shining with silver brilliancy.

All her ordinary occupations and interests came up before her now in an entirely different light; her capricious old mother, unreasoning love for whom had become a part of her very soul, her feeble but amiable old uncle, the domestics, the peasants, who worshiped their young mistress, the milch cows and the calves; all this nature which was forever the same in its continual death and resurrection, amid which she had grown up, with love for others, and with the love of others for her, — all this, which had hitherto given her such a gentle, agreeable peace of mind, suddenly seemed to her something different; it all seemed to her dismal, superfluous.

It was as if some one said to her, "Fool, fool! For twenty years you have been occupied in trivialities, you have been serving others without reason, and you have not known what life, what happiness, were!"

This was what she thought now as she gazed down into the depths of the motionless moonlit garden, and the thought came over her with vastly more force than

[1] *Durak durakom*, a downright fool.

ever before. And what was it induced this train of thought? It was not in the least a sudden love for the count, as might easily be supposed. On the contrary, he did not please her. It might rather have been the cornet of whom she was thinking; but he was homely, poor, and taciturn. She naturally enough forgot him, and with indignation and annoyance recalled to her memory the features of the count.

"No, he is not the one," she said to herself.

Her ideal was so charming! It was an ideal which might have been loved in the midst of this night, in the midst of this nature, without infringing its supernal beauty; an ideal not in the least circumscribed by the necessity of reducing it to coarse reality.

In days gone by her lonely situation, and the absence of men who might have attracted her, caused all the strength of the love which Providence has implanted impartially in the hearts of each one of us, to be still intact and potential in her soul. But now she had been living so long with the pathetic happiness of feeling that she possessed in her heart this something, and occasionally opening the mysterious chalice of her heart, of rejoicing in the contemplation of its riches, ready to pour out without stint on some one all that it contained!

God grant that she may not have to take this melancholy delight with her to the tomb! Who knows if there be any better and more powerful delight, or if it is not the only true and possible one?

"O Father in heaven," she thought, "is it possible that I have lost my youth and my happiness, and that they will never return? .... Will they never return again? Can it be really true?"

She gazed in the direction of the moon at the bright, far-off sky, studded with white wavy clouds, which were sweeping on toward the moon, blotting out the little stars.

"If the moon seizes that topmost little cloud, then it means that it is true," she thought.

A thin, smokelike ribbon of cloud passed over the lower half of the brilliant orb, and gradually the light

grew fainter on the turf, on the linden tops, on the pond: the black shadows of the trees grew less distinct. And as if to harmonize with the gloomy shade that was enveloping nature, a gentle breeze stirred through the leaves, and brought to the window the dewy fragrance of the leaves, the moist earth, and the blooming lilacs.

"No, it is not true!" she said, trying to console herself; "but if the nightingale should sing this night, then I should take it to mean that all my forebodings are nonsense, and that there is no need of losing hope."

And long she sat in silence, as if expecting some one, while once more all grew bright and full of life; and then again and again the clouds passed over the moon, making everything somber.

She was even beginning to grow drowsy, as she sat there by the window, when she was aroused by the nightingale's melodious trills clearly echoing across the pond.

The rustic maiden opened her eyes. Once more, with a new enjoyment, her whole soul was dedicated to that mysterious union with the nature which so calmly and serenely spread out before her.

She leaned on both elbows. A certain haunting sensation of gentle melancholy oppressed her heart; and tears of pure, deep love, burning for satisfaction, good consoling tears, sprang to her eyes.

She leaned her arms on the window-sill, and rested her head on them. Her favorite prayer seemed of its own accord to arise in her soul, and thus she fell asleep with moist eyes.

The pressure of some one's hand awakened her. She started up. But the touch was gentle and pleasant. The hand squeezed hers with a stronger pressure.

Suddenly she realized the true state of things, screamed, tore herself away; and, trying to make herself believe that it was not the count who, bathed in the brilliant moonlight, was standing in front of her window, she ran from the room. ....

CHAPTER XV

It was indeed the count. When he heard the maiden's shriek, and the cough of the watchman who was coming from the other side of the fence to investigate, he had the sensation of being a thief caught in the act, and darted across the dew-drenched grass, to hide in the depths of the park.

"Oh, what a fool I was!" he said instinctively. "I frightened her. I ought to have been more gentle, to have wakened her by gentle words. Oh, I am a beast, a blundering beast."

He paused and listened. The watchman had come through the wicket-gate into the park, dragging his cane along the sanded walk.

It was necessary for him to hide. He went toward the pond. The frogs made him tremble as they hastily sprang from under his very feet into the water. There, notwithstanding his wet feet, he crouched down on his heels, and proceeded to recall all he had done, — how he had crept through the hedge, found her window, and at last caught a glimpse of a white shadow; how several times, while on the watch for the least noise, he had crept up to her window, and then hastened away again; how at one moment it seemed to him that doubtless she was waiting for him with vexation in her heart that he was so dilatory; and at the next how impossible it seemed that she would so easily make an assignation with him; and how, finally coming to the conclusion that, through the embarrassment naturally felt by a country maiden, she was only pretending to be asleep, he had resolutely gone up to the window, and seen clearly her position, and then suddenly, for some occult reason, had run away again; and only after a powerful effort of self-control, being ashamed of his cowardice, he had gone boldly up to her and touched her on the hand.

The watchman again coughed, and, shutting the squeaky gate, went out of the park. The window in the young girl's room was shut, and the wooden shutters inside were drawn.

The count was awfully vexed to see this. He would have given a good deal for the chance to begin it all over again; he would not have acted so stupidly. ....

"A marvelous girl! what freshness! simply charming! And so I lost her. .... Stupid beast that I was."

However, as he was not in the mood to go to sleep yet, he walked, as chance should lead, along the path, through the linden alley, with the resolute steps of a man who has been angry.

And now for him also this night brought, as its gifts of reconciliation, a strange, calming melancholy, and a craving for love.

The clay path, here and there dotted with sprouting grass or dry twigs, was flecked with patches of pale light where the moon sent its direct rays through the thick foliage of the lindens. Here and there a bending bough, as if loaded down with gray moss, gleamed on one side. The silvered foliage occasionally rustled.

At the house there was no light in the windows; all sounds were hushed, only the nightingale filled with his song all the immensity of silent and glorious space.

"God! what a night, what a marvelous night!" thought the count, breathing in the cool fragrance of the park. "Somehow I feel melancholy, as if I were dissatisfied with myself and with others, and dissatisfied with my whole life. But what a splendid, sweet girl! Perhaps she was really offended."

Here his fancies changed. He imagined himself there in the garden with this country maiden in various and most remarkable situations; then his mistress Mina supplanted the maiden's place.

"What a fool I am! I ought simply to have put my arm around her waist, and kissed her."

And with this regret the count returned to his room. The cornet was not yet asleep. He immediately turned over in bed, and looked at the count.

"Are n't you asleep?" asked the count.

"No."

"Shall I tell you what happened?"

"Well."

"No, I 'd better not tell you. .... Yes, I will too. Move your legs over a little."

And the count, who had already given up vain regret for his unsuccessful intrigue, sat down with a gay smile on his comrade's bed.

"Could you imagine that the young lady of the house gave me a rendezvous?"

"What is that you say?" screamed Polozof, leaping out of bed.

"Well, now listen."

"But how? When? It cannot be!"

"See here; while you were making out your accounts in *préférence*, she told me that she would this night be sitting at the window, and that it was possible to get in at that window. Now, this is what it means to be a practical man; while you were there reckoning up with the old woman, I was arranging this little affair. You yourself heard her say openly in your presence, that she was going to sit at the window to-night, and look at the pond."

"Yes; but she said that without any meaning in it."

"I am not so sure whether she said it purposely or otherwise. Maybe she did not wish to come at it all at once, only it looked like that. But a wretched piece of work came out of it. Like a perfect fool I spoilt the whole thing," he added, scornfully smiling at himself.

"Well, what is it? Where have you been?"

The count told him the whole story, with the exception of his irresolute and repeated advances.

"I spoilt it myself; I ought to have been bolder. She screamed and ran away from the window."

"So she screamed and ran away?" repeated the cornet, replying with a constrained smile to the count's smile, which had such a long and powerful influence on him.

"Yes, but now it 's time to go to sleep."

Polozof again turned his back to the door, and lay in silence for ten minutes. God knows what was going on

in his soul; but when he turned over again, his face was full of passion and resolution.

"Count Turbin," said he, in a broken voice.

"Are you dreaming, or not?" replied the count, calmly. "What is it, Cornet Polozof?"

"Count Turbin, you are a cowardly scoundrel," cried Polozof, and he sprang from the bed.

CHAPTER XVI

The next day the battalion departed. The officers did not see any of the household, or bid them farewell. Neither did they speak together.

It was understood that they were to fight their duel when they came to the next halting-place. But Captain Schultz, a good comrade, an admirable horseman, who was loved by everybody in the regiment, and had been chosen by the count for his second, succeeded in arranging the affair in such a manner that not only they did not fight, but that no one in the regiment knew about the matter; and Turbin and Polozof, though their old relations of friendship were never restored, still said "thou," and met at meals and at the gaming-table.

FAMILY HAPPINESS

(1859)

PART FIRST

CHAPTER I

SONYA and I were in mourning for our mother, who had died in the autumn, and we had spent the whole winter in the country alone with Katya.

Katya was an old family friend, our governess, who had brought all of us up, and whom I had known and loved ever since my memory began. Sonya was my younger sister.

The winter at our old house at Pokrovskoye had been dreary and forlorn. The weather had been cold and windy, so that the snowdrifts were heaped high above our windows; the panes had been almost constantly covered with frost, so that nothing could be seen out of them, and we had been kept housed almost all the time. It was rare that any friends came to see us, and, if they did, they brought no increase of joy or cheer to our home. All wore long faces, and spoke with subdued voices, as if afraid of awakening some one; all refrained from laughing, but they sighed, and often shed tears and looked solemnly at me, and especially at little Sonya, in her black frock.

The presence of death still seemed to be felt in the house; the grief and horror of death were in the very atmosphere.

Mamma's chamber was shut up, and I felt a sensation

of pain, and also a strange impulse to look into that cold and empty chamber, when I passed by it on my way to bed.

At that time I was seventeen, and mamma, the very year that she died, was intending to move to the city for the sake of "bringing me out."

The loss of my mother was a terrible grief for me; but I must confess that there was associated with it the feeling that I was young and pretty — for everybody told me so — and that it was a pity to have wasted another winter alone in the country. Before the end of the winter this painful sense of loneliness and tedium increased to such a degree that I refused to leave my room, I kept the piano shut, and never took up a book.

When Katya advised me to do this thing or that, I replied: "I don't wish to, I can't," and the question arose in my soul, "Why? Why do anything, when the best days of my life are thus going to waste? Why?"

And to this question there was no other answer than tears.

They told me that I was growing thin, and losing my beauty, but even that made no difference to me.

Why? Who was to see?

It seemed to me that my whole life was destined to be spent in this dull solitude and helpless gloom, from which I had no power or even desire to make my escape.

Toward the end of the winter, Katya began to worry about me, and resolved, when the opportunity offered, to take me abroad. But in order to do this we needed money; and we had a very dim idea of what our mother had left us, and therefore we waited from day to day for our guardian to come and settle up our affairs.

In March he came.

"Now, thank the Lord!" said Katya to me, one day, as I was wandering about, from room to room, like a shadow, idle, listless, aimless; "Sergyeĭ Mikhaĭluitch has come; he sends to inquire after us, and will be here to dinner. Come, now! show a little energy, my dear Masha," she added. "Otherwise, what will he think of you? He is so fond of you both!"

Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch was a near neighbor of ours, and a friend of our late father, though he was much his junior. Not only would his coming change all our plans, and enable us to leave the country, but from childhood I had been accustomed to love and honor him; and so, when Katya advised me to "show a little energy," she knew very well that it would mortify me more to appear in an unfavorable light before him than before any other of our friends. Moreover, not only did I share the traditional attachment for him felt by every one in the house, from Katya and Sonya (whose godfather he was) down to the stable-boy, but in my eyes he had a special interest, owing to a word which mamasha had dropped in my hearing. She said that she would like to find such a man as a husband for me.

At that time her words struck me as strange and disagreeable, for my hero was a quite different sort of man. My ideal was graceful, slender, pale, and melancholy, while Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch was no longer young, was tall and stout, and, as it seemed to me, always cheerful; but nevertheless those words of mamasha's had struck my imagination, and, as long as six years before, when I was eleven and he had addressed me by the familiar *tui*, thou, had romped with me, and called me "little maid-violet,"[1] I had asked myself, not without dread, what I should do if he suddenly asked me to become his wife.

Before dinner, for which Katya had prepared a cream pie and a spinach sauce, Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch arrived. From the window I saw him drive up toward the house, in his light sleigh; but, as soon as he disappeared around the corner, I hastened into the drawing-room, wishing to make it appear that I was not too eagerly expecting him.

But as soon as I heard the sound of his feet in the anteroom, and his hearty voice and Katya's steps, I could not restrain myself, but ran out to meet him. He was holding Katya by the hand, and talking in his deep voice. A smile was on his face.

When he saw me, he paused and gazed at me for

[1] *Dyevotckka-fiyalka.*

some little time without bowing. I felt awkward, and was conscious that the color was rising in my face.

"Ah! is this really you?" he exclaimed, in his simple, straightforward manner, holding out his hands and coming toward me. "Can it be possible you have changed so much? How you have grown! Where is my violet gone? Now you are a full-blown rose."

He took my hand in his big hand, pressed it so firmly, so heartily, that it almost hurt me. I supposed that he was going to kiss it, and I bent toward him; but he merely pressed it again, and looked straight into my eyes with his frank, merry glance.

I had not seen him for six years. He had changed much, had grown older and darker, and now wore side-whiskers, that were very unbecoming to him; but he had the same unaffected manners, a frank, honorable face, with large features, intelligent, brilliant eyes, and an affectionate, almost childlike smile.

In five minutes he had ceased to be a stranger, and seemed to all of us like a member of the family — even to the servants, who were delighted at his coming, as was evident by their alacrity in serving him.

His behavior was entirely different from that of the neighbors who came after mamasha's death, and who felt constrained to speak in whispers and to shed tears while they were in the house; he, on the contrary, was talkative and jolly, and did not say a word about mother, so that, at first, this apparent indifference struck me as strange and even unbecoming in a man who had been so intimate with our family. But afterward I discovered that it was not indifference, but sincerity; and I was grateful to him for it.

In the evening, Katya sat down, in mamasha's old place in the drawing-room, to pour the tea. Sonya and I took our seats near her; old Grigori brought him one of papasha's pipes that had been put away, and, just as in days gone by, he began to walk up and down the room.

"How many terrible changes in this home, when you come to think of it!" he exclaimed, and stopped short.

"Yes," said Katya, with a sigh, and, putting the cover on the samovar, she looked at him, and almost burst into tears.

"And I suppose you remember your father?" he asked, addressing me.

"A little," I replied.

"And how much you would be to each other now!" he continued, looking gently and thoughtfully at my forehead and hair. "Your father was a very dear friend of mine!" he added, in a still gentler voice, and it seemed to me that his eyes became more luminous than ever.

"Well, it seemed good to God to take *her* also!" rejoined Katya, and immediately she laid her napkin on the teapot, took out her handkerchief, and burst into tears.

"Yes, terrible changes in this home!" he repeated, turning away. "Sonya, show me your toys," he added, in a moment or two, and went into the "hall." With my eyes brimming with tears, I looked at Katya as he went out.

"He 's such a splendid friend!" was her answer.

And, in truth, I felt a sensation of warmth and comfort around my heart, at the thought of this good man, though he was such a stranger.

As we sat in the parlor, we heard Sonya's piping voice, and his merry romping with her. I poured out his tea, and heard him sit down at the piano, and begin to touch the keys with Sonya's little fingers.

"Marya Aleksandrovna!" I heard him say, "come here and play me something."

I liked the simple and friendly way in which he laid his commands upon me; I got up and went to him.

"Here, play this," said he, opening the copy of Beethoven to the adagio of the *Sonata quasi una Fantasia*.[1] "Let us see how you play," he added, and went with his glass of tea into a corner of the room.

For some reason I felt that with him it was useless to refuse or to make excuses for playing badly; I sat

[1] Op. 27, No. 2, known familiarly as the "Moonlight" Sonata. — ED.

down obediently at the piano, and tried to play to the best of my ability, though I was afraid of his criticism, for I knew that he understood and loved music.

The adagio corresponded with the sentiment of the reminiscences awakened at the tea-table, and I imagine that I played tolerably well. But he did not ask me to play the scherzo.

"No, you would n't play that well," said he, coming up to the piano, "no matter about it; but you did n't play the first badly. You must have some comprehension of music."

This praise, which was certainly not extravagant, so delighted me that I even blushed. It was such a novel and pleasant experience for me that he, a friend and equal of my father, should talk seriously with me as if I were worthy of his notice, and no longer as with a child, as used to be the case.

Katya went up-stairs to put Sonya to bed, and we two remained in the "hall."

He told me about my father, and what a bond of sympathy united them, and what a happy life they led in those days when I was a mere child, amusing myself with picture-books and dolls. And his stories made me see my father for the first time in the light of a simple-hearted and lovable man, such as I had never thought of him before.

He also asked me about my tastes, my reading, and my ambitions, and gave me advice. He was now no longer merely a merry, jesting playmate, teasing me and making toys for me, but a grave, earnest, and lovable man, to whom I felt involuntarily drawn by affection and sympathy. While I talked with him, I felt perfectly at my ease, and enjoyed it; but, at the same time, I could not help feeling a certain strain on me. I was afraid for every word that I spoke; I had a strong desire to be worthy of his affection, which hitherto had been given to me simply because I was my father's daughter.

After putting Sonya to bed, Katya rejoined us, and complained to him of my apathy, of which I had said nothing.

"It seems, then, she has failed to tell me the principal thing," he said, with a smile, and shaking his head reproachfully at me.

"Why speak of it?" said I; "it is very stupid, and besides, it will pass away."

It actually seemed to me at that moment that my sense of lassitude not only would pass away, but that it had already passed away, and that it never had been.

"It 's unfortunate not to be able to endure solitude," said he. "Are n't you a grown-up young lady?"

"Of course I am," said I, with a laugh.

"Well, she 's a poor kind of young lady who is lively only while she is admired, and as soon as she is alone loses her spirits and takes no interest in anything; all for mere show and nothing for reality."

"You have a fine opinion of me," said I, for the sake of saying something.

"No!" said he, after a little silence. "It is not all in vain that you look like your father; there *is* something in you," and again his kind, penetrating eyes gave me a flattering look, and filled me with a strangely agreeable confusion.

Now for the first time I noticed that his face, which had impressed me as being so jovial, had a look peculiar to himself; serene at first, but afterward becoming more and more thoughtful, and even rather gloomy.

"There is no reason and no propriety in your being down-hearted," said he. "You have your music, which you understand, your books, your studies; and your whole life lies before you, and now is the only time in which you can prepare yourself for it, so that you will have nothing to regret. In a year it may be too late."

He talked to me like a father or an uncle, and I was conscious that he had constantly to exercise self-control not to look down on me.

I felt offended that he considered me beneath him, and at the same time it pleased me that he found it worth while for my sake, and my sake alone, to make an effort to show his friendship in this way.

The rest of the evening he talked business with Katya.

"Well, good-by, my dear friends," said he, getting up and coming over to me, and taking me by the hand.

"When shall we see you again?" inquired Katya.

"This spring," was his reply, as he still held my hand. "Now I am going to Danilovka," — that was another estate of ours, — "I shall look into your affairs there and make what arrangements I can; then I am going to Moscow on some business of my own, and then in the summer we shall see each other again."

"Now, why must you be gone so long?" I asked, feeling terribly depressed; in fact, I had hoped that we should see him every day, and suddenly I felt so melancholy and sad that all my former unhappiness seemed to return. This must have been expressed in my eyes and voice.

"Try to busy yourself as much as you can, and don't get down-hearted," said he, in a tone which seemed to me altogether too cool and natural. "When spring comes, I shall make you pass your examination," he added, dropping my hand, and not looking at me.

In the anteroom, where we were standing while he put on his shuba, again his eyes seemed to search me.

"It's no use for him to take so much trouble," said I to myself; "I wonder if he thinks I like to have him stare at me in that way. He is an excellent man, very excellent .... but if only .... "

For a wonder, it was very late when Katya and I went to bed, and we talked all the evening, not about him, but about how we should spend the coming summer, and where and how we should live next winter.

My bugbear of a question, *why*, did not recur to me. It seemed to me very simple and clear that one ought to live to be happy, and I imagined that the future would bring much happiness. Suddenly, as it were, our Pokrovsky house, so old and gloomy, presented itself to my imagination overflowing with life and light.

CHAPTER II

Spring had now come.

My former depression was gone, and its place was occupied by the dreamy melancholy of springtime, and by vague hopes and desires.

Though I lived in a healthier way than at the beginning of the winter, and occupied myself with my sister Sonya, and music and reading, still I used often to go into the garden, and wander long, long, up and down the paths, or sit on the bench, my mind filled with all sorts of thoughts, hopes, and desires.

Sometimes, especially when there was a moon, I would sit at the window of my room all night long, and when morning came I would throw on a single garment, and often go, without waking Katya, down into the park and across the dewy grass to the pond; once, I even went out into the field, and, alone and in the night, made the entire circuit of the park.

Now it is hard for me to recall and understand the illusions which at that time filled my imagination. Even when I succeed, I can scarcely believe that my dreams were made of such stuff, they were so strange and remote from the reality.

Toward the end of May, Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch returned from his journey, as he had promised.

His first call was toward evening, and he took us entirely by surprise. We were sitting on the terrace and preparing to drink tea. The park was already clothed in green, and the nightingales made their haunt in every thicket over all Petrovka. The tufted branches of the lilac bushes were everywhere covered with white and purple, with a hint of flowers on the point of bursting into bloom. The foliage of the linden alley was translucent in the setting sun. A fresh, cool shadow lay across the terrace. The grass was already wet with the heavy fall of evening dew. In the yard back of the park were heard the last sounds of day, the bustle of the cattle driven in from pasture. The simple-minded

Nikon crossed in front of the terrace, along the little path, with his watering-pot, and the cooling stream from the nozzle soon began to make the broken soil dark around the stems of the dahlias and their supports.

Near us, on the terrace, on a white cloth, stood the brightly polished samovar, bubbling and boiling, together with cream, biscuits, and cold meat. Katya, with her plump hands, was dipping the teacups like a careful housewife. I could not wait for my tea, for I was hungry after my bath, and was eating a piece of bread spread with thick, fresh cream. I had on a gingham blouse with flowing sleeves, and my wet hair was covered with a handkerchief. Katya was the first to see him through the window.

"Ah! Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch!" she exclaimed, "we were only just talking about you!"

I jumped up, and was going to run up-stairs to change my dress, but he met me just as I was at the door.

"Now, what is the use of ceremony in the country?" said he, glancing, with a smile, at my head and the handkerchief. "You see, you are not ashamed to wear it before Grigori, and I am no more than Grigori."

But at that very instant it seemed to me that he looked at me in a way Grigori would never have thought of doing, and I felt ill at ease.

"I will be back immediately," said I, starting away from him.

"What's the harm as you are?" he cried after me. "You are quite like a young peasant girl."

"How strangely he looked at me," said I to myself, as I hurriedly dressed myself up-stairs. "Well, thank God, he's come; now, it will be more lively."

After a hasty glance at the mirror, I gayly ran down-stairs, and, without disguising the fact that I had hurried, I went on the terrace all out of breath. He was sitting at the table, and telling Katya about our affairs. When he saw me, he smiled, and went on talking. According to him, our affairs were in a satisfactory condition. It was necessary for us merely to spend the

summer in the country, and then we could go for Sonya's education either to Petersburg or abroad.

"Well, now, if you could only be with us while we were abroad," said Katya. "But if we must be by ourselves it would be worse than being in the woods."

"Ah, how glad I should be to go round the world with you!" he said, half serious, half in jest.

"All right!" said I, "let us go round the world." He smiled and shook his head.

"But my mother, and my business?" he asked. "Well, as that is out of the question, now tell me, please, how you have been spending your time. Have you been melancholy any more?"

When I told him that during his absence I had been busy, and had not been troubled with depression, and when Katya corroborated my words, he praised me; and both his words and his looks were flattering, as if I were a child, and he had the right to patronize me. It seemed to me necessary to give him a faithful and circumstantial account of all that I had done in the right direction, and to confess, as before a priest, all that he might not approve.

The evening was so warm and pleasant that, after the tea things had been carried away, we still sat on the terrace; and the conversation was so full of meaning for me that I did not notice how, little by little, the sounds of the people about us had died away. From all sides arose more fragrantly the perfumes of the flowers; the abundant dew was falling on the sward; the nightingale, trilling in the privet bushes near us, hushed his song when he heard our voices; the starry sky seemed to bend down nearer to us.

Only when a bat suddenly flew under the awning over the terrace, and fluttered noiselessly about my white shawl, did I notice that it was already dark. I huddled close to the wall, and was opening my mouth to scream; but the bat, with the same swift, noiseless flight, darted out from under the awning, and disappeared in the darkness of the park.

"How I like your Pokrovskoye!" said he, making a

sudden change in the conversation. "I should like to spend my whole life sitting here on this terrace!"

"Well, then, why not sit here?" suggested Katya.

"That is very well," he went on, "but life does not sit still."

"Why don't you get married?" asked Katya. "You would make any one a splendid husband."

"Why, because I like a quiet life, think you?" and he laughed. "No, Katerina[1] Karlovna, there's no hope for you and me. Long ago all my friends ceased to regard me as a marrying man; and all the more for this very reason I have come to the conclusion that it is best this way; that's a fact!"

It seemed to me that he said that with a sort of affected gayety in his manner.

"Indeed, that's good! You have lived all of thirty-six years and are tired of life!" said Katya.

"Ah, but how much I have gone through!" he continued. "My only wish is to live a quiet life. But, to get married, something else is necessary..... Ask her," he went on to say, nodding his head toward me. "It is for such girls as she to get married. And you and I will look on and rejoice in their happiness!"

There was an undertone of sadness in his voice, and an intensity which did not escape my attention. He was silent for a little, and neither Katya nor I said a word.

"Now, just conceive of such a thing," he went on, turning around on his chair; "supposing I should suddenly, by some unfortunate chance, marry some maiden of seventeen, such a girl as Mash.... as Marya Aleksandrovna. That's an admirable illustration, I am very glad that I found such a one, it is the very best one possible!"

I laughed, and could not see any reason for his gladness at such an illustration, or where its application lay.....

"Now," said he, addressing me in a bantering tone, "tell me honestly, your hand on your heart, would it not

[1] Katya is the diminutive of Katerina; Sonya of Sofia, Masha of Marya.

be a trial for you to marry an old man who has lived out all his days, whose only desire is a quiet life, while God knows where you 'll go or what you want?"

I felt awkward, and made no answer, not knowing what to say.

"Now, see here, this must not be taken as an offer," said he, smiling, "but truly tell me, do you dream of such a husband when evenings you wander down the linden alley, or would you be unhappy with such a one?"

"No, not unhappy...." I began.

"Nor yet contented," said he, taking the words out of my mouth.

"Yes, but you see, I may be mis...."

But again he interrupted me.

"Well, now you see she is perfectly right, and I am so grateful to her for her frankness, and glad that we could have had this talk. Nevertheless, as far as I am concerned, such a marriage would be the greatest unhappiness," he added.

"What a queer man you are; you have n't changed in the least," said Katya, and she went in from the terrace to order the supper put on.

After she left us we sat in silence; around us not a sound was heard, except that the nightingale, not now in fitful snatches, as his habit is earlier in the afternoon, but with deliberate calmness, since now it was already night, poured out his plaint over all the garden, and another, down in the ravine below, for the first time this spring, replied to him from afar. The one nearest to us seemed to be listening for a moment, and still clearer and more intensely rang out the liquid harmonious trill. And with sovereign calmness their songs resounded in this world of night, so peculiarly their own, so strange to us.

The gardener went to the orangery to sleep, the sound of his heavy boots growing fainter and fainter along the path. Some one gave a shrill whistle twice, at the foot of the hill, and then there was silence again. The foliage rustled almost inaudibly, the canvas awning

over the terrace stirred a little, and a delicious fragrance was wafted across the terrace.

It seemed to me awkward to sit in silence, after what had been said; but I now was at a loss for something to say.

I looked at him. His eyes, gleaming in the twilight, were fixed on me.

"It is good to be alive in the world," said he.

For some reason I sighed.

"What is it?"

"Yes, indeed, it is good to be alive in the world," said I, echoing his words.

And again we relapsed into silence, and again I felt a sense of constraint. It occurred to me that I had offended him by agreeing with him that he was an old man; and I was anxious to soothe him, but I did not know how to do so.

"Well, good-by," said he, getting up. "Matushka is expecting me home to supper. I have scarcely seen her to-day."

"But I wanted to play my new sonata to you," said I.

"Some other time," said he, coolly, as it seemed to me.

"Good-by." [1]

It now more than ever seemed to me that I had offended him, and I felt sorry. Katya and I escorted him to the porch; and we stood in the courtyard, looking down the road, where he was soon lost to sight.

As soon as the sound of his horse's feet died away, I went around on the terrace and began once more to gaze down into the garden; and, in the dewy darkness, which muffled the sounds of night, long I saw and heard all that fancy made me see and hear.

He came a second and a third time, and the constraint arising from the strange conversation which had arisen between us entirely wore away, and did not return.

As the summer went on, he rode over to see us two or three times a week, and I became so accustomed to his visits that when any unusual length of time elapsed without our seeing him I became lonely, and was vexed

[1] *Prashchaïte*, adieu.

with him and thought that he was not nice to neglect me so.

He treated me as a dear young comrade, asked me questions, encouraged the most cordial frankness, gave me advice, stimulated me, sometimes scolded me and checked me.

But in spite of all his endeavor to keep himself down on a level with me, I was conscious that, back of what was manifest to me in him, there lay a whole world into which he felt it unnecessary to admit me; and this it was which had the greatest influence on my imagination, and most attracted me to him.

I knew from Katya and our neighbors that, over and above his care for his aged mother, with whom he lived, over and above his responsibilities as a landed proprietor and as our guardian, he had to exercise certain functions connected with the nobility, which were most distasteful to him.

But how he looked on all this, and what his convictions, plans, and hopes were, I never could get the slightest intimation from him. As soon as I led the conversation round to his own affairs, he frowned in his characteristic manner, as much as to say, "Please, I beg of you; this does not concern you," and brought up some other topic of conversation.

At first this offended me, but afterward I became so accustomed to talking about matters concerning myself alone that it seemed quite natural.

Another thing which used at first to displease me, but afterward came to be even pleasant, was his perfect indifference and apparent contempt for my personal appearance. Never by a look or a word did he hint that I was pretty; but, on the contrary, he frowned or smiled when I was called pretty in his presence. He even took pains to pick out my defects and banter me on the subject of them. The fashionable gowns and the way in which Katya liked to do up my hair for festive occasions aroused merely his sarcastic comments, which hurt the good Katya's feelings, and at first quite disconcerted me.

Katya, who was convinced in her own mind that I pleased him, could not understand at all why he did not like the woman who pleased him to appear in the most attractive light.

But I quickly came to see what he wanted. He was anxious to feel assured that I was free from coquetry. And when I understood that, then I made it evident that there was not a shadow of coquetry about me, in my dress or my hair or my actions. But this very thing showed like an embroidery in white worsted, that I had the coquetry of artless simplicity at a time when as yet artlessness was not natural to me.

I was aware that he loved me, but whether as a child or as a woman I did not ask myself; I prized his love, and, being conscious that he considered me the very best girl in the world, I could not help hoping that he might still persist in this illusion.

And I involuntarily helped to deceive him. But the very act of deceiving him in this way made me better. I felt how much wiser and nobler it was for me to show the better side of my soul than of my body.

My hair, my hands, my face, my manners, whatever they were, good or bad, it seemed to me, he understood and appreciated at a glance, so that I could not add anything to my exterior, except the desire to deceive.

But my soul he did not know, because he loved it, and because it was all the time expanding and developing; and thus it was that I could and did deceive him. And how easy it was to manage him when I clearly understood this. My unreasonable agitation, my awkwardness of movement, entirely disappeared.

I had the consciousness that, no matter how he saw me, whether from front face or in profile, whether sitting or standing, whether my hair was up or down, he knew me thoroughly, and, as it seemed to me, was satisfied with me as I was.

I am certain that if, contrary to his habit, he had followed the example of others, and told me that I was pretty, I should not have been in the least delighted. But, on the other hand, how happy and light-hearted I

was when, after some insignificant remark of mine, he looked steadily at me, and said, in a voice which trembled a little, in spite of his attempt to impart a bantering tone: —

"Yes, yes, there is *something* in you. You are a splendid girl; I must tell you so."

And why was it that at that time I received a reward such as filled my heart with pride and joy? Because I said that I sympathized with the love of old Grigori for his little granddaughter, or because I was moved to tears by reading some poetry or novel, or because I preferred Mozart to Schulhof!

And the preternatural keenness of intuition, by which, at that time, I selected what was good, and worthy of admiration, struck me as marvelous; and yet, assuredly, I was perfectly ignorant of what was good and what ought to be liked.

The most of my former habits and tastes had not pleased him, and a movement of his brow, a glance, was all that was needed to show that he did not like what it was on my tongue to say, and my peculiar disgusted and almost scornful expression, as it seemed to me, made him see that I detested what I had loved before.

It often happened that, when he was going to give me advice about anything, it seemed to me that I knew beforehand what he was going to say. He would ask me a question and look into my eyes, and that look of his sufficed to draw from me the thought which he was after. All my thoughts and feelings at that time were his, not mine; but by becoming mine they went to make up my life, and fill it with light. Absolutely, without being myself conscious of it, I began to look at all things with different eyes — at Katya and at our domestics and at Sonya and at myself and my occupations.

The books which I had formerly read, simply for the sake of killing time, suddenly became for me one of the greatest pleasures of my life, and the reason of it was simply this: that he and I talked about them, or read them together. He kept me well supplied with books.

Formerly, the time that I spent in superintending

Sonya's lessons was burdensome, and I undertook it only perfunctorily, as a duty. He interested himself in her lessons, and it became a pleasure to me to see what progress and success the child made.

Hitherto it had seemed an impossibility for me to learn a whole piece of music by heart, but now, knowing that he would listen to it, and perhaps commend me for it, I would practise over a single passage forty times in succession, so that poor Katya stopped up her ears with cotton, but I found it not in the least tedious. The old sonatas, somehow or other, seemed to phrase themselves in an entirely different manner, and produced a different and vastly better effect.

Even Katya, whom I knew and loved as myself, underwent a change in my eyes. For the first time I understood that she was under no obligation to be our mother, our friend, our slave, such as she had been. I appreciated all the dear soul's self-renunciation and devotion, appreciated all that I owed to her, and loved her more than ever before.

He taught me to look on all of our dependents — peasants, domestics, maid-servants — in an entirely different way from before.

I am ashamed to confess that I had lived among these people for seventeen years, and knew less about them than about people whom I had never seen; it had never once occurred to me that these men and women had the same affections, desires, and sorrows as my own.

Our park, our groves, our fields, which I had known so long, suddenly acquired a new beauty in my eyes. Nor vainly spoken was his remark that there is only one enduring happiness in life — to live for others. It seemed to me strange at the time; I did not understand it; but this conviction had unconsciously penetrated into my heart. He opened up for me a whole life of joy in the present, not making any apparent change in my life, adding nothing except himself to every impression. Everything which, since childhood, had been inert around me suddenly became endowed with life. He had only to make his appearance for everything to

break into speech, and, at the same time, for all the powers of my soul to spring into life, filling it with joy.

Often I would go up-stairs to my room, fling myself on my bed, and give myself up to the sway, not of the melancholy longings, hopes, and desires with which spring endowed the future, but of present happiness. I could not go to sleep, but would get up, go over to Katya's bed, and confide to her sympathetic ears the story of my perfect happiness; now, as I look back upon it, I can see no reason for telling her; she could see it with her own eyes. But she told me that she needed nothing, and that she, also, was very happy, and gave me a kiss. I believed her, for it seemed to me right and proper for every one to be happy.

But Katya was not superior to thoughts of sleep, and she would pretend to grow stern, and drive me off from her bed, and go to sleep; but I would still remain awake, reviewing all my reasons for happiness.

Sometimes I got up and said my prayers for a second time, thanking God in my own words for the happiness which He had vouchsafed me.

And in my room it was still; the only sound was Katya's deep, regular breathing, the clock ticking by her side, and my restless turning, and murmuring broken words, or crossing myself and kissing the crucifix which hung around my neck. The doors were closed, the shutters in the windows were drawn, a fly or mosquito was buzzing in some spot. And I felt as if I should like always to stay in my little room, to have the morning forever delay her coming, to retain forever about me my present spiritual atmosphere. It seemed to me that my dreams, my thoughts, and my prayers were living creatures, abiding there with me in the darkness, flying about my bed, hovering over me.

And every thought was his thought, every feeling his feeling. And at that time I did not as yet know that this was love. I thought that this state of feeling might exist forever, that this feeling was unreciprocated.

CHAPTER III

One day, at the time of the grain-harvesting, I went out with Katya and Sonya, into the garden, after dinner, to our favorite seat, in the shade of the linden overlooking the ravine, beyond which stretched a view of forests and fields.

Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch had not been to see us for two days past, and we were expecting him this day, the more confidently because our overseer had said that he promised to go out into the field with him. About two o'clock we saw him riding across the field of rye. Katya told the maid to bring some peaches and cherries, of which he was very fond, and then, glancing at me with a smile, stretched herself out on the bench, and was soon dozing.

I broke off a crooked branch of the linden that hung down with succulent leaves and juicy bark, which moistened my hand, and, while I fanned Katya, I continued to read, though I kept stopping to look down the field road along which he would come to us.

Sonya, sitting on the root of an old linden tree, was busy making an arbor for her dolls. The day was hot, calm, and sultry; clouds had been gathering and growing black, and ever since morning a thunder-shower had been threatening. I was agitated, as always before a thunder-shower. But since noon the clouds had begun to dissipate, the sun came out bright, and only in one quarter of the sky was there low-muttered thunder, and one heavy cloud, piling up above the horizon and blending with the dust over the fields, was occasionally cut by the vivid zigzag flashes of the lightning darting to earth. It was clear that we at least should escape for that day.

All along the road back of the park, as we could see, here and there, moved the uninterrupted lines of creaking teams, heaped high with sheaves, slowly lumbering toward the barns, while the empty carts were hastening out for fresh loads, accompanied by peasants dressed in variegated shirts.

The thick dust neither moved off nor settled, but hung in the air, behind the hedges, among the translucent leaves of the trees in the park.

Farther away, at the threshing-floor, were heard voices, the creaking of wheels, and the rustle of the yellow sheaves slowly moving by the fence, then they seemed to fly through the air, before my eyes grew into oval houses, and I could see the outlines of the sharp, pointed roofs, and the figures of the peasants swarming about them.

Out on the dusty field also the carts were moving about, and there also the yellow sheaves could be seen, and the sounds of wheels, of voices, and of songs were borne in to my ears.

On one side, the stubble-field became more and more open, with patches of wormwood growing here and there.

Farther down toward the right, scattered over the unsightly, still encumbered field that had just been reaped, could be seen the bright-colored dresses of the women binding the sheaves, bending over and waving their arms, while the encumbered field grew clear, and the beautiful sheaves were disposed at intervals upon its level surface.

Suddenly, as it were, before my very eyes, summer was transformed into autumn. Dust and heat were all about, except in our beloved nook in the park. On all sides, in this dust and heat, and exposed to the rays of the sun, were the laboring folk, talking, and moving about with noise and bustle.

But Katya was snoring so peacefully under her white cambric kerchief, and was so comfortably curled up on the cool bench, the cherries looked so black, juicy, and tempting on the plate, our gowns were so fresh and clean, the water in the pitcher gleamed so refreshingly cool in the sun, and I felt so happy!

"What can I do about it?" I asked myself. "How am I to blame that I am happy? But how to share my happiness? And how and to whom shall I give all that I am and all my happiness?"....

The sun had already gone behind the crown of the

birch alley, the dust was settling down over the field, the atmosphere became clearer and brighter under the slanting rays of the sun; the clouds had passed entirely off; at the threshing-floor, beyond the trees, the tops of three new sheaf-ricks could be seen, and the peasants were going away from them; the carts, loudly creaking, were hastening down into the field for the last time; the peasant women, with rakes over their shoulders, and sheaf-withes in their belts, hurried home with ringing songs, but still Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch did not come, although it had been long since I saw him riding down the road.

Suddenly, his tall form appeared, coming along the alley, a direction from which I had not been expecting him; he had ridden round the ravine. With his face shining with pleasure, and taking off his hat, he came up to me with hasty steps. When he saw that Katya was asleep, he bit his lip, shut his eyes, and came up on tiptoe. I instantly perceived that he was in that peculiar state of inexplicable good spirits which I was so awfully fond of in him, and which we called "wild enthusiasm." He was just like a schoolboy released from his lessons; his whole being, from head to foot, was instinct with satisfaction, happiness, and childlike merriment.

"Well, how are you, my young violet? how is your health? Are you well?" he whispered, coming to me, and pressing my hand. .... "Yes, I 'm feeling first rate," said he, in reply to my inquiry. "I am thirteen years old to-day; I want to play horse and climb trees!"

"In wild enthusiasm?" I asked, looking into his laughing eyes, and feeling that this *wild enthusiasm* was taking possession of myself also.

"Yes," said he, in reply, winking one eye, and trying to look sober. "But why do you keep hitting Katerina Karlovna in the nose?"

I had not noticed, while I was looking at him and continued to wave the branch, that I had knocked Katya's handkerchief off, and was tickling her face with the leaves.

I laughed.

"But she will insist that she was n't asleep," said I, in a whisper, as if I were trying not to awake Katya; but that was not the real reason: it was simply because it was pleasant for me to talk in a whisper with him.

He moved his lips, imitating me, mimicking me because I spoke so low that it was impossible to hear what I said.

Seeing the plate of cherries, he pretended to steal it, went over to Sonya, under the linden, and sat down on her dolls. Sonya was angry at first, but he soon made peace with her by devising a game in which he and she were to see which could eat the most cherries.

"If you like, I will have some more brought," said I. "Or get them yourself."

He took the plate, set the dolls on it, and he and I went together to the inclosure. Sonya, laughing, ran after him, tugging at his coat, to make him give her back the dolls. He gave them back to her, and turned to me in all seriousness.

"Now, why are n't you a violet?" said he to me, softly, as if he were still afraid of waking some one. "As soon as I came to you, after all the dust and heat and work, I seemed to smell a violet, and not the fragrant violet, ... but you know that first variety, which is rather dark, and smells of melting snows and the spring vegetation!"

"Well, but how is everything getting along on the estate?" I asked, in order to hide the delicious confusion caused by his words.

"Splendid! These peasants are splendid wherever you find them. The more one knows them, the fonder of them one becomes."

"Yes," said I. "This very day, before you came, I was looking from the garden at their work, and suddenly I felt so ashamed because they were working and I was sitting there comfortably doing nothing that...."

"Don't take this subject lightly, my dear," said he, interrupting me. He suddenly grew grave, but looked

into my eyes affectionately. "It is sacred; God keep you from making a show of such a thing."

"Yes, it is only to *you* I say this."

"Well, yes, I know; but how shall we get the cherries?"

The inclosure was locked up, and no gardener was about (he himself had sent them all off to work). Sonya ran off to find the key, but he, without waiting for it, climbed up by one corner, lifted the netting, and sprang down upon the other side. "Will you have some?" I heard him say from within. "Give me the plate."

"No, I want to pick them myself. I will go after the key myself," said I. "Sonya won't find it."....

But at that very time I had the strongest desire to see what he was doing there, how he looked, how he moved, when he supposed that no one was observing him. Yes, the truth of the matter was that at that time I did not want to lose him from sight for a single moment. I crept round on my tiptoes, on the nettles, to the other side of the inclosure, where it was lower, and, standing on an empty tub, so that the wall came just below my breast, I looked over into the inclosure.

My eyes searched the whole interior of the inclosure, with its ancient, gnarled trees and their wide, dentated leaves, under which hung down, heavy and straight, the luscious black cherries; bending my head under the net, I saw Sergyeĭ Mikhaĭluitch standing under the bough of an old cherry tree.

He evidently supposed that I had gone, and that no one saw him. With his hat off, and his eyes shut, he was sitting on the crotch of the old tree, and was busy rolling a morsel of cherry gum into a little ball. Suddenly he shrugged his shoulders, opened his eyes, and, muttering something, smiled. The word he said and his smile were so peculiar that I repented of having played the spy. It seemed to me that he had muttered the word "Masha."

"It cannot be," said I to myself.

"Milaya Masha — dearest Masha," he repeated, still more gently and affectionately. But I heard those

words distinctly. My heart beat so violently, and such extreme, and as it were forbidden, joy seized me, that I clung fast with both hands to the fence, so as not to fall and betray myself. He heard my motion, looked up in alarm, and suddenly, dropping his eyes, reddened, and grew as flushed as a child.

He tried to say something to me, but was unable, and his face grew hotter and hotter. He smiled, however, as he looked at me. I smiled in return.

His whole face was radiant with pleasure.

It was no longer the old uncle flattering and lecturing me: it was a man, neither superior nor inferior to myself, a man who loved and feared me, and whom I also feared and loved.

Neither of us spoke, but we looked at each other. But suddenly he frowned; the smile and gleam vanished from his eyes, and his attitude toward me grew cold and paternal again, as if we had been doing something improper, and he had come to his senses and advised me to come to mine.

"You would better get down; you will fall and hurt you," said he. "And smooth your hair; you have no idea how you look!"

"Why does he play the hypocrite? Why does he want to hurt my feelings?" I asked myself, indignantly. And at that minute I was seized by an irresistible desire once more to confuse him and try my power over him.

"No, I want to pick them myself," said I, and, grasping a branch that hung conveniently near, I stood up on the wall, and got my feet over. He made no attempt to assist me as I leaped down to the ground inside the inclosure.

"What foolish things you do!" he exclaimed, reddening again, and trying to hide his confusion under the guise of annoyance. "You see, you might have hurt yourself. And how will you get out of here?"

He was still more confused than before, but this time his confusion frightened rather than pleased me. It was contagious; I blushed, and, going a little distance

from him, and not knowing what to say, I began to pick cherries, though I had nothing with me to put them into. I reproached myself, I repented, I was afraid, and it seemed to me that I had forever forfeited his good opinion by my rash behavior. Both of us were silent, and the silence was awkward.

Sonya came running with the key, and rescued us from this constraint. But it was some time before either of us said a word, and we both addressed our remarks to Sonya.

When we returned to Katya, who insisted that she had not been asleep, but had heard everything, I felt more at my ease, and he tried to assume his ordinary patronizing, fatherly tone. But it was not quite in his power to do so, and he did not deceive me in the least. I had at that moment the liveliest remembrance of a conversation which had taken place, a few days before this, between us.

Katya had been saying how much easier it was for a man to love and express his love than it was for a woman.

"A man can say that he loves, but a woman cannot," said she.

"But I have an idea that a man should not and cannot say that he loves," said he.

"Why so?" I asked.

"Because it would always be a lie. What sort of a discovery is it that a man loves? As soon as one says this, a sort of bolt, as it were, is drawn, he becomes a slave — he is in love. As soon as he utters that word, it seems as if some miracle must necessarily take place, some extraordinary phenomenon, as if a broadside of cannon were fired off all at once. It seems to me," he went on to say, "that men who solemnly pronounce the words, 'I love you,' either deceive themselves, or, what is worse, deceive others."

"Then, how is a woman to know that she is loved, if she is not to be told?" asked Katya.

"I don't know," he replied. "Every man has his own form of speech. But it is a feeling, and should be

expressed as one. When I read novels I always imagine what an embarrassed face Lieutenant Stryelsky or Alfred must put on at the moment of saying, 'I love thee, Eleonora!' He thinks that there is to be some extraordinary result; but nothing happens to either him or her; they have still the same eyes and the same nose; everything is the same."

Underneath his jesting remark, I felt at the time that there was a serious meaning which had reference to me; but Katya was not satisfied to be put down with the heroes of romance.

"Always paradoxes," said she. "But now tell me truly, have you never told a woman that you loved her?"

"I never have, and I have never yet got down on my knees," said he, with a laugh. "And I never shall."

"Certainly there is no need, now, for him to tell me that he loves me," I said to myself, vividly recalling that conversation. "He loves me, and I know it. And all his efforts to appear indifferent do not succeed in throwing dust in my eyes."

All that evening he had little to say to me, but in every word he spoke to Katya or Sonya, in his every motion and glance, I detected love, and I was not mistaken. I merely felt annoyed and sorry for him, that he should think it necessary to dissimulate and to pretend to be indifferent, when all the time it was so evident, and when it would have been so simple and easy to be happy beyond telling. But how tormented I was by my criminal act of springing down on him in the cherry inclosure! I had an idea that I had lost his esteem in consequence, and that he was angry with me.

After tea I went to the piano, and he joined me.

"Play something for me; I have not heard you for a long time," said he, overtaking me in the drawing-room.

"I was going to..... Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch!" I exclaimed, suddenly looking him straight in the eye, "you are not vexed with me, are you?"

"Why should I be?" he asked.

"Because I did n't do as you wanted me to, this afternoon," I explained, blushing.

He understood me, shook his head, and laughed. His look told me he would have scolded, but that he did not feel strong enough for it.

"I did n't mean anything by it; we are friends again, are n't we?" said I, taking my seat at the piano.

"Why, certainly," said he.

The large, high-studded drawing-room was lighted only by two candles, set on the piano; the rest of the room was in a semi-darkness. The clear summer night gleamed in through the open window. All was still; occasionally Katya's steps were heard, as she moved about in the dark reception-room, and Sergyeĭ Mikharluitch's horse, fastened under the window, whinnied and stamped his hoofs on the turf.

He sat behind me, so that I could not see him; but everywhere — in the half-light that filled the room, in the music, in my own soul — I felt his presence.

Every glance, every motion of his, though I could not see them, was manifest to my heart.

I played Mozart's sonata fantasia, which he had brought to me, and which I had learned under his direction and for his sake. I was not thinking at all of what I was playing, but I must have played it well, and I felt certain that he was satisfied. I was conscious of the delight which he was experiencing, and, though I was not looking at him, and he was behind me, I felt the look which he fastened on me.

Quite in spite of myself, while I still continued mechanically touching the keys, I turned around and glanced at him. His head was outlined against the clear background of the night. He was sitting, with his head resting on his hand, and looking steadily at me with gleaming eyes.

I smiled when I saw his look, and stopped playing. He smiled back at me, and reproachfully nodded his head at the music, signifying that I should go on.

When I finished, the moon, which had already risen high, was shining in through the other window, and,

blending with the feeble light of the candles, was flooding the floor with its silvery beams.

Katya declared that it was shameful for me to stop at the best part of all, and insisted that I was not playing very well, but he maintained that I had never played so well as that evening; and he began to walk up and down through the rooms, from the drawing-room into the dark reception-room, and back again, each time looking at me and smiling. And I also smiled; I even felt like laughing, though there was no reason for it, — so happy was I at anything that might happen on that day.

As soon as he was behind the door and out of sight, I seized Katya, who was near me by the piano, and began to kiss her in the place that I liked best of all, on her plump neck, under her chin; as soon as he came back again, I put on a serious face and did my utmost to refrain from smiling.

"What has happened to her to-day?" asked Katya.

But he made no reply, and merely laughed at me. He knew what had happened to me.

"Just see what a beautiful night it is!" said he, from the reception-room, where he was standing in front of the balcony door which opened into the park.

We went to him, and indeed it was such a night as I have never seen since. The full moon hung over the house, back of us, so that it was out of sight, and half of the shadow of the roof, of the pillars, and the awning of the terrace lay foreshortened obliquely, *en raccourci*, on the sanded foot-path and the oval grass-plot. All the rest was bright, and flooded with moonlight gleaming on the silvery dew. The wide path between the flower-beds, across which, on one side, lay the slanting shadows of the dahlias and their supports, stretched away, fresh and cool, and shining with glittering pebbles, into the misty distance.

Under the trees could be seen the bright glass roof of the orangery, and out of the ravine rose a shadowy vapor. The still clumps of lilacs, where the flowers were not as yet in bloom, were bathed in moonlight.

All the flowers, wet with dew, could be distinguished from one another. Light and shade were so mingled in the alleys that it seemed as if they were not composed of trees and paths, but were transparent houses, rocking and swaying.

At the right, in the shadow of the house, all was dark, dim, and weird. But, with all the greater distinctness from contrast with this darkness, the fantastic crest of the poplar seemed to hang strangely suspended, near the house, the top all bathed in bright light, and ready to soar away, far away, into the calm blue sky.

"Let us go out and take a walk," said I.

Katya agreed, but told me to get my overshoes.

"It is not necessary, Katya," said I. "Here, Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch will give me his arm."

Just as if that would prevent me from dampening my feet!

But at that time all three of us understood my meaning, and it did not seem strange at all. He had never offered me his arm, but now I took it of my own accord, and he did not find it strange. He and I went together down from the terrace. All this world, this sky, this park, this atmosphere, were no longer the same as I had known them.

When I looked along the alley through which we were walking, it seemed to me that we should in a moment be brought to a stop, that yonder the world of the possible would end, that all this spectacle must continue forever changeless in its beauty.

But still we moved on, and the magic shadow-wall of beauty gave way before us, and let us pass beyond, where also, so it seemed, were our well-known park, the trees, the paths, the dry leaves. And we were actually walking along the paths, treading on the circlets of light and shadow, and it was actually the dry leaves rustling under our feet, and the cool breeze which fanned my face! And this was really he, who, as he walked quietly beside me, with slow steps, discreetly allowed my hand to rest on his arm; and this was actually

Katya, who, shuffling along, followed just behind us. And that could be nothing else than the moon itself in the sky, shining down on us through the motionless branches!....

But at each step the magic shadow wall seemed to close behind us and before us, and I ceased to believe that we might go farther, ceased to believe in the reality of all that surrounded us.

"Ah! a frog!" exclaimed Katya.

"Who said that, and why?" I asked myself. And I instantly realized that it was Katya, and that she was afraid of frogs, and I looked to the ground. A little frog hopped up before me, and came to a standstill, and his tiny shadow lay along the bright clay walk.

"And aren't you afraid of them?" he asked.

I glanced at him. One of the lindens of the alley had been cut down, and at that particular place where we were passing his face was brightly illuminated by the moonlight. It was so beautiful and full of happiness....

He said, "Aren't you afraid?" but there was a deeper meaning to his words. I heard him say, "I love thee, dear little maiden! I love thee, love thee!"

His glance and his arm said them; and the light, and the shadow, and the air, and everything repeated the same.

We made the circuit of the whole park. Katya went with us, taking short steps and getting out of breath from her exertion. She said that it was time to go back, and I felt sorry, sorry for her, poor old soul!

"Why doesn't she feel the same as we do?" I wondered. "Why are not all young, all happy, as this night is and as he and I are?"

We returned to the house, but it was long before he took his leave, although the cocks were crowing, although all in the house were asleep, and his horse kept stamping more and more impatiently and whinnying under the window. Katya did not remind us that it was late, and, as we sat there talking about various trifles, we had no idea that it was already three o'clock in the morning!

The cocks were beginning to crow for the third time,

and there was a faint tinge of dawn in the sky, when he went away. He took his departure, as usual, without saying anything out of the ordinary course of things; but I well knew that from henceforth he was mine, and that I should not lose him. As soon as I confessed to myself that I loved him, I told Katya the whole story. She was very glad and very much touched because I told her, but the poor soul was able to get some sleep that night, while I, on the contrary, walked long, long, up and down the terrace, and went into the park, and, while recalling every word, every gesture, I walked along the very same alleys where he and I had been together.

I could not sleep that night, and for the first time in my life I sat up till sunrise, and saw the early morning. And never since have I seen such a night and such a morning!

"But why," I asked myself, "why does he not tell me simply that he loves me? Why does he imagine such difficulties, why does he call himself an old man, when everything is so simple and beautiful? Why does he waste golden time, which perhaps can never return again? Let him say, '*I love*,' let him say the words, let him take my hand in his, let him press it to his lips, and say, '*I love*.' All that is necessary is for his face to flush and his eyes to be cast down before me, and then I should tell him all. Or no, not tell him, but rather throw my arms around him and press him to my heart and weep!.... But suppose I am mistaken and he does not love me!"

That thought suddenly came into my mind.

I was alarmed at the feeling that came over me; God knows where it might lead me,—and his confusion and mine also in the cherry inclosure, when I sprang down where he was, came back to my memory, and I became heavy-hearted, very heavy-hearted. Tears sprang to my eyes. I tried to pray. And a strange feeling of peace and hope came to me. I resolved to prepare for the Sacrament from this day forth, to partake of the Holy Communion on my birthday, and on that very day to become his betrothed.

Why? Wherefore? How could it be brought about? I had not the slightest idea, but from that moment my faith was firm, and I knew that this would be so. It was already perfectly light, and the people were beginning to get up, when I went to my room.

CHAPTER IV

It was the Fast of the Assumption, and therefore no one in the house was surprised at my resolution to prepare for the Sacrament during these days.

During that entire week he did not once come to see us, and I was not only not surprised or alarmed or hurt, but, on the contrary, I was glad that he did not come, and I only expected that he would come on my birthday.

During that entire week, I got up every morning early, and while they were harnessing the horses I would wander alone through the park and meditate on the sins I had committed the day before, and consider what I ought to do on the present day in order to be satisfied with my time and not fall deeper into sin.

At that time it seemed to me so easy to be absolutely without sin. It seemed to me that all that was necessary was to try. As soon as the horses were put in, I would take Katya or one of the maids and drive, in our lineĭka, three versts, to church. As I entered the church, I always remembered that prayers were offered for all "who came in the fear of God," and I strove to mount the two grass-grown steps of the porch under the influence of this feeling.

At that time of day there were never more than a dozen peasants or household serfs in the church, preparing for the Communion, and I tried with strenuous humility to respond to their salutations, and I myself went to the candle cupboard to get tapers of the old soldier who served as sacristan, and I placed them before the ikons, and this seemed to me to be a meritorious action.

Through the "Holy Gates"[1] I could see the altar-cover which mamasha had embroidered; on the ikonostas were the two angels spangled with stars, which when I was a little girl had seemed to me so huge, and the dove with a yellow nimbus which used to engross my childish attention.

Behind the chancel rail could be seen the modeled font, at which I had stood so many times as godmother for the children of our house-serfs, and where I myself had been christened.

The old priest came in his chasuble, made of cloth that had been my father's pall, and read the church service in the very same tone in which he had so many times read it, since my earliest remembrance, at our own house, at Sonya's christening, at my father's requiem mass, and at my mother's funeral.

And the precentor's trembling voice, as it echoed through the choir, was the same; and there was the same old woman whom I always remembered to have seen at church, at every service, as she stood all bent over, next the wall, looking with tearful eyes at the ikon in the chancel, and pressing her clasped hands to her faded shawl, and mumbling prayers with her toothless mouth.

And there was nothing in all this to arouse my curiosity, nor was it dear to me from associations alone; but it was all grand and holy now in my eyes, and seemed to me full of deep significance.

I listened to every word of the stated prayers, and endeavored to respond to them with my feeling; and where I failed to understand the full depth of them, then I mentally implored God to enlighten me, or, in place of the prayer that I could not understand, I inaudibly murmured one of my own.

When the prayers of repentance were read, I recalled my past, and that childish, innocent past seemed to me

[1] The *ikonostas*, or screen, which shuts off the Holy Place from the rest of the church, has three doors or gates, the middle one the "*Tsarskaya dveri*," the Tsar's or the Holy Gates, and the "Northern" and "Southern," on either side. — ED.

so black in comparison with the present enlightened state of my soul that I wept and was terrified; but, at the same time, I felt that all was forgiven me, and that, if my sins had been even more heinous, my repentance would have been correspondingly sweeter.

At the end of the service when the priest said, "The blessing of God be upon you," it seemed to me that I felt a physical sense of well-being instantly take possession of me. A peculiar feeling of light and warmth, as it were, suddenly flowed into my heart.

When the service was over, the good father would come to me and inquire if it would not be a good plan to have an all-night service at our house, and when he should come; but I thanked him warmly for his offer, because I felt that it was for my sake that he suggested it, and I told him that I would come to him or would let him know.

"Do you wish to give yourself the trouble?" he asked.

I did not know what answer to make for fear of laying myself open to the sin of pride.

After mass, I always sent the carriage home, unless Katya were with me, and returned alone on foot, humbly bowing low to all whom I met, and trying to find some opportunity of doing good, giving advice, sacrificing myself for some one, helping lift a load, rocking a child, or stepping out into the mud to make room for some one to pass.

One evening I heard the overseer telling Katya that Semyon, one of the peasants, had come to beg for some boards to make a coffin for his daughter, and a little money for a mass, and that he had given it.

"Why, are they so poor?" I asked.

"Very poor; they can't even get enough to eat,"[1] replied the overseer.

Something seemed to clutch at my heart, and at the same time I felt a sort of joy at hearing this. Giving Katya the mistaken impression that I was going out for a stroll, I ran up-stairs, collected all my money (it was

[1] Literally, "they sit without salt."

very little, but all that I had), and, crossing myself, I went alone over the terrace and through the park, into the village, to Semyon's izba.

This was at the very end of the village, and I, without being seen by any one, went up to the window, laid the money on the sill, and tapped on the glass.

Some one came out of the cottage, making the door creak on its hinges, and called to me; but I, trembling and chilled with fright, ran home like a transgressor.

Katya asked me where I had been, and what was the matter with me; but I did not even comprehend what she asked me, and I made no reply. It all suddenly seemed to me so mean and petty. I shut myself up in my room, and for a long time walked to and fro, unable to act or to think or to account for my feeling.

I thought of the pleasure which the whole family would feel, of the blessings which they would shower down on the one that had bestowed the money, and I began to feel sorry that I had not myself given it to them.

I thought also what Sergyeĭ Mikhaĭluitch would say if he knew about this foolish freak of mine, and I was glad enough that no one would ever know anything about it. And I had such a sense of joy, and all, including myself, seemed so contemptible, and yet I looked with such kindly feelings upon myself and upon all that the thought of death came to me like a vision of happiness. I smiled and I prayed and I wept, and what a passionately ardent love for myself and every one else in the world I felt at that moment!

I read the Gospel as it is found in the prayer-book; and more and more comprehensible seemed to me this book, and more attractive and simple the story of that divine life, and more terrible and impenetrable the deep feelings and thoughts which I found in its doctrines. But for that very reason how clear and simple seemed everything to me when, after laying down this book, I again directed my thoughts and observations to the life about me.

It seemed to me so hard not to live aright, and so simple to love every one and to be loved by all. All were so kind and sweet to me; even Sonya, to whom I continued to give lessons, was entirely different, and tried to understand me, and to satisfy me, and not to give me annoyance.

All behaved toward me as I myself behaved. In trying to think over all my enemies, those whose forgiveness I ought to ask before confession, I recalled only one, a young lady, a neighbor. I had laughed at her, a year before, in presence of guests, and she had ceased to visit me. I wrote her a letter, confessing my fault and asking her forgiveness. She replied in a note, granting it, and, in her turn, asking me to forgive her. I wept with delight as I read those simple lines, in which, at that time, I could see a deep and touching significance. My old nurse wept when I asked her to forgive me.

"Why are they all so kind to me? What have I done to deserve such love?" I asked myself. And I involuntarily recalled Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch, and for a long time thought about him. I could not do otherwise, and I did not look on it as an impropriety. I thought of him now, however, in an entirely different way from what I did that night when, for the first time, I realized that I loved him; I thought about him just as I did about myself, and naturally he entered into every plan concerning my future.

The crushing ascendancy which his presence had over me entirely disappeared from my imagination. I now felt myself on an equality with him, and, from the height of the spiritual mood to which I had reached, I thoroughly understood him. What had hitherto been strange in him now became clear to me. For the first time I understood why he declared that happiness consisted only in living for others, and now I was in perfect accord with him. It seemed to me that we should be so endlessly and serenely happy together. And no thought entered my mind of journeys abroad, or of gay society, of brilliant life, but something entirely different — a

quiet, domestic life in the country, with constant self-sacrifice, with constant love for each other, and with constant acknowledgment of a kind and helpful Providence in all things.

I partook of the Holy Communion, as I had proposed to do, on my birthday. My heart was so full of happiness when I returned that day from church that I dreaded life, dreaded every impression, everything that might in the least disturb such happiness. But as soon as we had dismounted from the lineïka, and were mounting the steps, a well-known cabriolet rattled across the bridge, and I saw Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch. He congratulated me, and we went together into the drawing-room. Never, since our acquaintance began, had I been so calm and self-possessed as I was that morning. I felt that there was within me a whole new world, high above him, and of which he was ignorant. I did not feel in his presence the slightest restraint. He must have understood something of this; for he was affectionately gentle toward me, and treated me with a peculiarly religious deference. I was going to the piano; but he shut it, and put the key into his pocket.

"Don't destroy your present mood," said he. "Your soul is now full of harmony better than any earthly music."

I was grateful to him for his thoughtfulness; but, at the same time, I felt a little disappointment that he should so easily and clearly read all that ought to be kept a secret from every one, in my soul.

At dinner he said that he had come to congratulate me, and at the same time to say good-by, as he was going to Moscow the next day. In saying this he looked at Katya; and then he gave me a fleeting glance, and I saw how he feared to witness the emotion in my face.

But I was neither surprised nor annoyed, and I did not even ask him whether he should be gone long. I knew that he would say these words, and I knew also that he would not go.

How did I know this? I can never, even to the pres-

ent day, explain it to myself; but on that memorable day it seemed to me that I knew everything, whatever had been, and whatever would be. I seemed to be in a blissful dream, when things that have not yet taken place seem to be already in existence, and long ago a part of my knowledge, and yet all is still to come, and I know that it is to come.

He intended to go away immediately after dinner, but Katya, who was tired in consequence of the service, went to lie down for a little while, and he was obliged to wait till she had finished her nap, so as to say good-by to her.

The sun shone brightly in the "hall"; we went out on the terrace. As soon as we had sat down, I began with perfect serenity the conversation that was destined to decide the fortune of my love. And I began to speak at the very moment that we sat down, neither sooner nor later, so that nothing had as yet been said, when there was nothing as yet to give a different tone or character to our talk, or to affect unfavorably what I wanted to say. I myself cannot understand whence came the calmness, decision, and accuracy that marked my expressions. It seemed as if it were not myself, but something quite independent of my will, that spoke in me. He took a seat in front of me, leaning his arm on the balustrade, and, drawing down toward him a branch of lilac, kept pulling off the leaves. When I began to speak, he let the branch fly back, and rested his head on his hand. This might have been the attitude of a man perfectly calm or very much agitated.

"Why are you going away?" I asked, in a significant tone, deliberately, and looking him full in the face.

He did not answer at once.

"Business," he exclaimed, dropping his eyes.

I saw how hard it was for him to tell me a falsehood, in answer to a question put with such frankness.

"Listen," said I. "You know what this day is for me. In many ways this day is very important. If I ask you the question, it is not out of mere compliment (you know that I am so used to seeing you, and that I

am fond of you), but I ask you because I must know. Why are you going?"

"It is very hard for me to tell you the truth why I am going," said he. "This past week I have thought much about you and about myself, and I have come to the conclusion that it is my duty to go. You know why, and, if you are fond of me, you will not ask me."

He rubbed his forehead with his hand, and shut his eyes. "This is hard for me!.... But you understand."

My heart began to throb violently.

"I cannot understand," said I. "*I cannot; you* will tell me. For Heaven's sake, for the sake of this day, tell me; I can hear the whole calmly," said I.

He changed his position, glanced at me, and again pulled down the branch.

"Besides," said he, after a pause, and in a voice that vainly tried to be firm, "though it is stupid and impossible to put into words, though it is hard for me, I will try to explain to you," he went on, contracting his brows as if with physical pain.

"Well?" said I.

"Imagine that there was a certain gentleman. Let us call him A," said he; "old, and weary of life; and a lady, B, young and happy, who has never as yet seen society or life. In various family relations, he had learned to love her as a daughter, and never had any fear that he should learn to love her otherwise."

He paused, but I did not interrupt him.

"But he forgot that B was so young that life for her was still a plaything," he went on, suddenly beginning to speak rapidly and resolutely, and not looking at me, "and that he might easily learn to love her in a different way, and that this would be sport for her. And he himself was deceived and suddenly woke to the consciousness that another feeling, heavy as regret, had taken possession of his soul, and he was frightened. He was frightened lest their former friendly relations might be interrupted, and he resolved to depart before they should be interrupted."

In saying this, he again, as it were, carelessly rubbed his eyes with his hand, and closed them.

"Why, pray, should he be afraid of loving her in a different way?" I asked, in a scarcely audible tone. I controlled my agitation, and my voice was calm; but he really seemed to think that I was jesting.

He replied in a tone that showed he was evidently offended.

"You are young," said he, "and I am no longer young. You enjoy trifling; but I must have something else. Trifle as much as you like, only not with me; otherwise, I verily believe, I should do something rash, and you would feel sorry. This is what A said," he added. "Well, it may be all nonsense, but you understand why I am going. And now let us not say anything more about it. Please!"

"No, no! we will speak more about it!" I cried, and the tears made my voice tremble. "Did he love her or not?"

He made no reply.

"But if he did not love her, why has he trifled with her as with a child?" I demanded.

"Yes, yes; A was to blame," he answered hastily, interrupting me. "But all that came to an end, they parted .... friends."

"But that is horrible! And was there no other possible ending?"

The words were barely out of my mouth when I was appalled at my temerity.

"Yes, there is," said he, uncovering an agitated face, and looking straight at me. "There are two different ways of ending it. But for God's sake do not interrupt me, and hear me calmly. Some say," he began, standing up, and looking at me with a painfully sad smile, "some say that A became crazy, fell madly in love with B, and told her so. .... But she only laughed at him. For her this was merely amusing, but for him it was a matter of life and death."

I shivered, and tried to interrupt him, to tell him that he had no right to speak for me; but he restrained me, laying his hand on mine.

"Stop!" said he, in a trembling voice. "Others say that she had pity on him, that she imagined — poor little girl, who has never seen much of the world — that she might really love him, and so consented to be his wife. And he was mad enough to believe it, to believe that his life might begin anew; but she herself saw that she was deceiving him, and he was deceiving her. .... Let us not say anything more about this," he concluded, evidently not having the force to speak further, and he began silently to walk up and down in front of me.

He said, "Let us not say any more about this," but I saw that, with all the powers of his soul, he was waiting for my reply. I wanted to speak, but I could not; something seemed to oppress my breast. I looked at him; he was pale, and his lower lip quivered. I felt sorry for him. I put forth all my strength, and, suddenly breaking the chain of silence which bound me, I said, in a weak, choking voice, which I feared each second would fail me: —

"But there is a third ending," said I, and paused, but he kept silence. "But there is a third ending, that he did not love, but gave her deep, deep pain, and thought that he was doing right, and went away, and prided himself on doing so. On your side, and not on mine, is the trifling; from the first day I have loved you — yes, loved you," I repeated, and at the word *loved* my voice, in spite of myself, changed from a gentle tone to a wild shriek, which frightened me.

He stood all pale before me; his lips quivered more and more, and two tears rolled down his cheeks.

"It is cruel!" I almost screamed, and I feared that I should suffocate with angry, unwept tears. "What is the reason?" I cried, and got up to leave him.

But he would not let me go. His head bent forward on my knees; his lips were kissing my trembling hands, and his tears wet them.

"My God, if I had only known!" he cried.

"What is the reason? what is the reason?" I kept repeating; but my soul was already full of joy — a joy never to be taken from me, never to be repeated.

In five minutes Sonya was running up-stairs to Katya, and was shouting all over the house that Masha was going to marry Sergyeï Mikhaïlovitch.

CHAPTER V

THERE was no reason for postponing our wedding, and neither of us desired such a thing. To be sure, Katya was anxious to go to Moscow and make purchases and order a trousseau; and his mother urged him to get a new carriage and furniture, and have the house furnished with new hangings, before he should marry. But we both decided that it would be better to attend to all these things afterward, if indeed they were so necessary; and, accordingly, the wedding was celebrated a fortnight after my birthday, — without a trousseau, without guests, without groomsmen, without a supper and champagne, and all those conventional accessories of a wedding.

He told me how annoyed his mother was to have the marriage ceremony performed without music, without a mountain of trunks, and a complete renovation of the house, so different from her wedding, which cost thirty thousand rubles, and how she was solemnly making a secret search through the trunks in her storeroom, and taking Maryushka, the housekeeper, into consultation in regard to certain rugs, curtains, and salvers indispensable for our felicity.

On my side, Katya did the same with the old nurse Kuzminishna. And it was of no use to speak jestingly with her, in respect to this. She was firmly convinced that when he and I were talking over our future we were merely talking soft sentimentalities, and behaving foolishly, as people in such conditions are usually supposed to do, but that our material happiness in the future would depend on the regular cut and embroidery of my underwear, and the hemming of table-cloths and napkins.

Between Pokrovskoye and Nikolskoye mysterious

messages were exchanged several times each day, respecting various preparations; and, although outwardly Katya and his mother seemed to be on the most affectionate footing, still their intercourse began to be conducted in accordance with a subtle but somewhat hostile diplomacy.

Tatyana Semyonovna, his mother, with whom I now became much more closely acquainted, was a precise, stern housekeeper,[1] and a lady of the old school. He loved her, not only as a son, for duty's sake, but also as a man, through his intellect, regarding her as the very best, most intelligent, kindest, and most lovable woman in the world. Tatyana Semyonovna had always been kind to us, and to me especially, and she was glad that her son was going to marry me; but when I visited her after my betrothal, it seemed to me that she was anxious to make me understand that I was not after all the best match for her son, and that it was well for me never to forget it. But I entirely understood her and agreed with her.

During the last two weeks of my maidenhood, we saw each other every day. He came to dinner and stayed till midnight. But, in spite of his declaration that he could not live without me, and I knew he spoke the truth, he never spent a whole day with me, and tried still to give some attention to his affairs.

Our outward relations continued up to the very day of the wedding the same as before; we still addressed each other formally with *vui*, you; he did not kiss even my hand, and not only did not seek, but even avoided, opportunities of being alone with me. He really seemed to be afraid that the affection which was in his heart would become too overmastering and injurious.

I cannot tell, either he or I had changed, and, now I felt that I stood on the same footing with him, I no longer found in him that affectation of simplicity which had formerly displeased me, and oftentimes I saw before me instead of a man inspiring respect and awe, a sweet child spoiled with happiness.

[1] *Khozyaïka doma.*

"There is nothing so surprisingly great in him," I often said to myself. "He is simply a human being, just as I am, nothing more."

It now seemed to me that there was nothing hidden from me, that I knew him thoroughly. And all that I saw of him was so simple and so congenial to me! even his plans for our future mode of life coincided with mine, only they were expressed more clearly and admirably in his words.

The weather these days was wretched, and we spent most of the time in the house. Our best and most intimate talks were held between the piano and the window. The candle-light was reflected in the black window-panes, against which, now and again, fell the raindrops and trickled down. The rain beat on the roof, and poured from the spout into the pool; the dampness spread over the window. And how much brighter, warmer, and more cheerful, from very contrast, it seemed in our corner.

"Do you know, I have for a long time wanted to tell you one thing," said he, as we were sitting late one evening in this place. "I have been thinking about it all the time that you were playing."

"Do not tell me anything; I know it all," said I.

"Yes, you are right; we will say nothing about it."

"Oh! but tell me; what were you going to say?" I asked.

"Well, this was it: Do you remember when I told you the story about A and B?"

"The idea of not remembering that stupid story! It's well that it ended as it did." ....

"Yes, a little more and I should have ruined my own happiness. You saved me. But the main thing was that I was telling a falsehood all the time, and my conscience pricks me, and I wish to finish telling it."

"Oh, please! it is not necessary!"

"Don't be alarmed," said he, with a smile. "All I wish is to set myself right in your eyes. When I began to speak, I wanted to reason."

"Reason? What for?" I exclaimed. "It is never necessary."

"Yes, I reasoned badly. After all my disillusions, my mistakes in life, when I came to live in the country, I resolutely told myself that love, for me, was at an end, that all that was left for me was the duty of living out my remnant of life, and it was long before I realized what my feelings were toward you, and where they were leading me. I hoped and despaired. Sometimes it seemed to me that you were playing the coquette; then again my faith returned, and actually I did not know what I should do. But after that evening, — you remember, don't you, when we walked in the park that moonlight night? — I was filled with alarm; my happiness then seemed to me too great, and impossible. Well, what would have happened to me if I had allowed myself to hope and found that it was in vain. But, of course, I was thinking only of myself, because I am a miserable egotist."

He stopped talking and looked at me.

"However, it was not absolute nonsense that I spoke at that time. For you see there was good reason for me to fear. I receive so much from you, and can give so little in return. You are still only a child, you are a bud, which is yet to unfold; you love for the first time, while I...."

"Yes, tell me all the truth about it," said I, but suddenly I felt overmastered by a sudden terror at what his answer might be. "No, no, it is not necessary," I added.

"Whether I have ever loved before, you mean?" he exclaimed, instantly divining my thought. "I can tell you about it. No, I have never loved before. Never have I experienced such a feeling as this."....

But suddenly some painful memory seemed to flash through his mind. "No, and just here is where I need a heart like yours in order to have the right to love you," said he, gloomily. "Was it not necessary, therefore, for me to think it all over before telling you that I loved you? What is there for me to give you? Love, that is true."

"Is that little?" I asked, looking him in the eyes.

"Little, my dear, little for you," he continued. "You have youth and beauty! Often now I cannot sleep at night, I am so happy, and because I keep thinking how we are going to live together. I have had many experiences in life, and it seems to me that I have now found all that is essential for happiness. The quiet lonely life in our country solitude, with the possibility of being benefactors to people to whom it is easy to do good, and who are so unaccustomed to it, then work, work which brings its own reward, then rest, nature, books, music, love for some congenial spirit, — such is my ideal of happiness, and I cannot conceive of a higher. And then, above all, such a friend as you are; a family perhaps, and all that any man could desire in this world."

"Yes," said I.

"For me, since I have lived out my youth, yes; but not for you," he went on to say. "You have not as yet seen anything of life; you very likely have still some desire to seek happiness in another, and perhaps you would find it in another. It seems to you now that this is happiness because you love me."

"No, this quiet home happiness has always been my aim and ambition," said I. "And you have simply expressed what I have always thought."

He smiled.

"It only seems so to you, my dear. This is little to you. You have youth and beauty," he repeated thoughtfully.

But I was annoyed, because he did not believe me, and because he, as it were, made my youth and beauty a reproach.

"Then, why do you love me?" I asked angrily. "For my youth or for myself?"

"I don't know, but I love you," he replied, looking at me with his keen, fascinating glance.

I made no answer, and could not help looking into his eyes. Suddenly, something strange took place in me; first I ceased to see all surrounding objects; then his

face disappeared from before me; his eyes alone seemed to be gleaming in front of my eyes; then it seemed to me that those eyes took possession of me; then everything grew dim, everything faded from my sight, and I had to shut my eyes in order to get rid of the sense of passionate bliss and terror which that glance of his gave me. ....

On the eve of the day set for the wedding, late in the afternoon, the weather cleared. And after the rains, which had begun while it was still summer, we had our first clear, cool autumn evening. Everything was wet, cool, and bright, and now, for the first time, the park began to open out its vistas through the autumnal coloring of the leaves which already had begun to fall.[1] The sky was clear, cold, and wan. I went to bed happy in the thought that the morrow — the day of our wedding — would be fair.

On that day I woke with the sun, and the thought that it was *to-day*, as it were frightened me and filled me with fear and wonder.

I went down into the park. The sun had only just risen, and was shining through the thin yellow foliage of the linden trees along the driveway. The path was strewn with rustling leaves. The wrinkled, bright clusters of berries on the mountain ash gleamed red on the branches, where still hung a few crumpled leaves killed by the frost; the dahlias stood shriveled and black. Frost, for the first time, lay like silver across the pale green grass, and on the broken burdocks near the house. On the clear, cold sky not a single cloud was or could be seen.

"Can it be to-day?" I asked myself, not daring to believe in my happiness. "Can it be that I shall wake up to-morrow not here, but in that strange house at Nikolskoye, with its columns? Is it possible that I shall no longer have to wait for his coming, no more be going out to meet him, talk no longer about him with Katya? Shall I no more sit with him at the piano in our

[1] Literally, could be seen the autumnal spaciousness, variegation, and bareness.

Pokrovskoye drawing-room? Shall I no more see him to the door and worry about him, when the nights are dark?"

But then I remembered he had told me, the evening before, that he had come for the last time, and Katya had called me to try on my wedding-dress, and said, "It is for to-morrow," and, for a moment, I really believed it and again doubted.

"Can it be that after to-day I am going to live there with my husband's mother, without Nadyozha, without old Grigori, without Katya? Shall I no longer kiss my nurse good-night, and have her, according to old custom, make the sign of the cross over me, and say, 'Good-night, my young lady'?[1] I shall no longer teach Sonya, and play with her, and knock on the wall for her in the morning, and hear her ringing laughter! Must I to-day be changed into another person, a stranger to myself, and is a new life, the realization of my hopes and desires, opening out before me? Will this new life last forever?"

I waited impatiently for him to come; it was hard for me to be alone with these thoughts.

He came early, and only when I saw him did I really believe that this day I was to be his wife, and cease to tremble at the thought.

Before dinner we went to our church, to hear a mass in memory of my father.

"If he were only alive now!" I thought, as we were returning home, and I silently leaned on the arm of the man who had been the warmest friend of him of whom I was thinking. During the prayer, while I knelt, with my forehead pressed to the cold stones of the chapel floor, I recalled my father so vividly, I had such a firm belief that his spirit was cognizant of me and approved of my choice, that it seemed to me that even now it was hovering over us, and was conscious of him giving us his blessing. And recollections and hopes and happiness and grief mingled within me in one triumphant and delicious feeling, which was still further intensified by the calm, fresh air; the calmness, the wide

[1] *Pakoïnoï nochi, baruishnya.*

bare fields, the pale sky, from which fell over all things bright but gentle rays, striving to kindle the color in my cheeks.

It seemed to me that the man who was by my side understood and shared my feeling. He walked quietly and silently, and his face, into which I looked from time to time, expressed the same serious emotion in which blended both grief and joy, and which was both in nature and in my heart.

Suddenly he turned to me, and I saw that he wished to say something. It occurred to me, "Suppose he should not speak of what I am thinking?"

But he spoke of my father, though he did not even mention him.

"Once he said to me in jest, 'You must marry my Masha!'"

These were his words.

"How happy he would be now," said I, warmly pressing the arm on which I leaned.

"Yes; you were then only a child," he went on to say, looking into my eyes. "I used to kiss those eyes, and loved them only because they were like his, and I had no thought then that they would be for their own sake so dear to me. I called you Masha then."

"Say *thou* to me," said I.

"That is what I have wished," he went on. "But only now does it seem possible to me that *thou art* wholly mine."

And his calm, happy, fascinating glance rested on me, and we walked still without hurrying along the field path, scarcely traceable amid the trampled piles of stubble; our footsteps and our voices alone broke the silence. On one side, beyond the ravine, stretched away toward the distant forest, now stripped of leaves, the brown stubble-field, where, not far from us, a peasant, with his rude plow, was noiselessly marking a black strip, which grew constantly wider and wider. The drove of horses, scattered at the foot of the hill, seemed close at hand.

On the other side, and straight ahead of us, the dark

field of winter wheat, touched by the frost, and marked here and there with greenish patches, stretched away clear up to the park and the house which could be seen rising directly behind it. Everything was bathed in the autumnal rays of the sun. Long filaments of cobwebs stretched in every direction. They floated through the air around us, and hung over the field dried by the frost; they got into our eyes and clung to our hair and our garments. When we spoke, our voices were resonant, and seemed to hover over us in the motionless atmosphere, as if we were alone in the midst of the great world, and alone under the blue arch, over which played an unscorching sun, flashing and trembling.

I also wanted to use the familiar *tui*, thou, to him; but I felt abashed.

"Why *dost thou* walk so fast?" I asked, hurrying over the words, and almost whispering them, and feeling the blood rush to my face.

He slackened his pace, and looked still more affectionately, still more gayly and joyfully, at me.

When we reached the house, his mother and the guests whom we could not avoid asking were already assembled, and, up to the moment when, on leaving the church, we took our seats in the carriage to ride to Nikolskoye, I was no longer alone with him.

The church was almost empty; I saw, out of the corner of my eye, only his mother, standing prim and precise on the carpeting in the choir; Katya, in her cap with lilac ribbons, and with tears on her cheeks; and two or three house-serfs, who stared at me with curiosity.

I did not look at him, but I was conscious of his presence near me. I listened to the words of the prayers, and repeated them with my lips, but there seemed to be no echo of them in my soul. I could not pray; I looked stupidly at the ikons, the tapers, the embroidered cross on the back of the priest's chasuble; at the ikonostas, the church windows, — and everything was like a dream.

I only had a confused consciousness that something

unusual was happening to me. When the priest, with the cross, turned to us and congratulated us, and said that he had christened me, and now God had granted him the privilege of marrying me; when Katya and his mother kissed us, and Grigori's voice was heard as he drove up the carriage, I was amazed and frightened, because it was all over and nothing extraordinary had taken place in my soul; nothing that corresponded to the mysterious sacrament which had been performed over me.

He and I exchanged kisses; and this kiss was so strange, so alien to our feelings.

"Is that all?" I asked myself.

We went to the church porch; the wheels echoed with a hollow sound under the vaulted roof; my face was fanned by the cool breeze; he put on his hat and handed me into the carriage. From the carriage window I saw the crescent of the frosty moon.

He took his seat next me, and shut the door. Something throbbed in my heart. The self-assurance with which he did this seemed to me insulting.

Katya's voice screamed something about protecting my head; the wheels struck against a stone, and then we turned into the smooth road and were off. Throwing myself back in one corner, I looked out of the window on the distant fields and the road, seeming to reflect a pale light from the chill rays of the moon. And, though I did not look at him, I felt the consciousness that he was next to me.

"And is this all that the moment for which I have waited so anxiously has to give me?" I asked myself, and it began to appear mean and humiliating to sit alone so near to him. I turned to him with the intention of saying something, but no word found utterance; it was as if there were in me none of that former feeling of affection, and as if humiliation and dismay had taken its place.

"Till this moment I have not been able to persuade myself that this was to be," he softly murmured, in reply to my look.

"Yes; but somehow or other it is terrible to me," I replied.

"Am I terrible to you, my love?" he asked, taking my hand and bending his head down to it.

My hand lay lifeless in his, and in my heart there was a sense of painful coldness.

"Yes," I whispered.

But then, suddenly, my heart began to beat more violently, my hand trembled and suddenly pressed his hand; a feeling of warmth came o'er me, my eyes tried to look into his, in the twilight, and I suddenly felt that I was not afraid of him; that this dismay was — *love;* new and vastly more tender and strong than before. I felt that I was wholly his, and that I was happy in his power over me.

PART SECOND

CHAPTER I

DAYS, weeks, two months of lonely country life went by, imperceptibly as it seemed at that time; but, at the same time, the emotions, sensations, and delights of those two months would have sufficed for a whole lifetime.

Neither my dreams nor his of how our life in the country should be organized were realized at all as we had anticipated. But our life was in no respect a disappointment of our dreams. There was none of that strenuous labor, the fulfilment of duty, self-renunciation, and life for others, which I had imagined when I became his betrothed; it was, on the contrary, one absorbing, selfish affection for each other; a desire to be loved, a constant, causeless delight, and oblivion of all in the world.

To be sure, he sometimes went into his library, and shut himself up to attend to his affairs; sometimes he went to town, and, again, he was absent on business about the estate; but I saw how hard it was for him to tear himself away from me. And he himself acknowledged that everything in the world seemed to him such perfect triviality, unless I were there, that he could not conceive the possibility of taking any interest in them.

It was exactly the same with me. I read, occupied myself with my music, with his mother, with the school; but I did this only because each one of these occupations was connected with him and met with his approbation; but, as soon as ever the thought of him failed to be connected with any particular task, my hands would fall at my side, and it would seem so queer to think that there was any one besides him in the world.

Possibly this was an unworthy, selfish feeling; but it gave me pleasure and elevated me high above all the world.

In my eyes he was the only being on earth, and I considered him the handsomest and most perfect man in the world; consequently, I could not live for any one besides him, or help trying to be in his eyes what he thought me to be. And he considered me the first and the most beautiful woman in the world, endowed with every possible perfection, and I strove to be this woman in the eyes of the first and best man in all the world.

Once he came into my chamber while I was engaged in prayer. I glanced at him and continued with my devotions. He sat down at the table, so as not to disturb me, and opened a book. But it seemed to me that he was looking at me, and I looked round. He smiled; I began to laugh, and could not go on with my devotions.

"And have you already said your prayers?" I asked.

"Yes, but go on; I will leave you."

"You say your prayers, I hope; don't you?"

He made no reply, and was about to go; but I detained him.

"My sweetheart,[1] please, for my sake, read a prayer with me."

He stood by my side, awkwardly dropping his hands, and began with a serious countenance, but falteringly, to read. Now and then he turned to me, as if to find approbation and encouragement in my face.

When he had read it through, I laughed and gave him a hug.

"That's the way with thee; it's just as if I were ten years old again!" he exclaimed, reddening, and kissing my hand.

Our house was one of those old country mansions in which had lived, in mutual love and reverence, several generations of one family. It was all redolent of sweet, pure family recollections, and these, when I came to live in it, seemed suddenly to have become part and parcel with my own traditions.

[1] *Dusha moya*, "my soul."

The furnishing and adornment of the house were in the old-fashioned style such as Tatyana Semyonovna preferred; it could not be said that they were elegant and magnificent; but there was an abundance of everything, from servants to furniture and food; everything was tidy, solid, stiff, and awe-inspiring. In the drawing-room, the furniture was arranged with symmetrical precision; the wall was hung with portraits; home-made rugs and striped linen were spread on the floor.

In the divan-room stood an old grand piano, chiffonniers of two distinct styles, divans, and brass and mother-of-pearl tables. My boudoir, by the care of Tatyana Semyonovna, was furnished with the most beautiful furniture of different centuries and styles, and, among other things, an old pier-glass, into which I could never glance without a sense of bashfulness, but which finally became as dear to me as an old friend.

Tatyana Semyonovna did not let her voice be heard in the house; but everything went like clockwork, though there were a great many superfluous servants. All of these servants, who wore soft shoes, without heels, — Tatyana Semyonovna considered squeaking shoes and the noise of heels as the most unpleasant things in the world, — all the servants seemed proud of their station, trembled before the old lady, looked on my husband and me with patronizing affection, and evidently did their work with extraordinary contentment.

Regularly every Saturday, all the floors in the house were washed, and the rugs beaten; on the first day of the month a *Te Deum* was performed, and holy water sprinkled; every time that a name-day occurred — Tatyana Semyonovna's, her son's, or mine (mine the first time it occurred, that autumn) — a banquet was given to all the neighborhood. And all this sort of thing had been done, without ever a break in the custom, since Tatyana Semyonovna's earliest remembrance.

My husband did not interfere in the domestic economy, and merely took charge of the management of

the farm[1] and the serfs; and that occupied him a good deal. Even in winter he got up very early, and was usually gone when I woke. He returned generally to morning tea, which we drank by ourselves, and almost always at this time, after the troubles and annoyances of his work, he would appear in that extraordinarily jolly frame of mind which we used to call "wild enthusiasm."

Oftentimes I tried to induce him to tell me what he did in the morning, and he would relate such absurdities that we almost died laughing; sometimes I urged him to give me a serious account, and he would restrain himself and tell me. I looked into his eyes, at the motion of his lips, and remembered nothing, but I was merely delighted to see him and to hear his voice.

"Well, what have I been telling you? Let us hear it," he would say, and I could not tell him the first word. It was so absurd that *he* should tell *me* about anything else than our own selves. It scarcely made any difference what it was that he had been doing. It was not until long afterward that I began to understand or feel any interest in his labors.

Tatyana Semyonovna did not make her appearance till dinner-time; she drank her tea alone, and only sent a messenger to inquire how we had slept. In our especial, insanely happy little world, it sounded so strange to hear the voice from her solemn, orderly quarters, so different from ours, that oftentimes I could not refrain from laughing heartily in reply to the maid who, with folded arms, gravely announced that "Tatyana Semyonovna has sent to inquire how you slept after your yesterday's ride, and she begs to inform you, in regard to herself, that she suffered all night long from the neuralgia, and that a stupid dog in the village barked and prevented her from getting any rest. And she also would be pleased to know how you liked to-day's baking; and begs to remark that Taras did not make the bread to-day, but that Nikolashka was allowed to try his hand for the first time, as an experiment, and

[1] *Polyevoye khozyaïstvo.*

has done not at all badly, says she, especially in the rolls, but he cooked the biscuits too much."

Till dinner-time we were very little together. I played, read to myself; he wrote or went out again; but at four o'clock, when we had dinner, we went to the drawing-room; "mamasha" sailed out of her room, and several visitors, indigent ladies of noble birth, several of whom we always had at the house, made their appearance. Regularly, each day, my husband, in accordance with immemorial custom, offered his mother his arm, to take her out to dinner; but she insisted that he should give me his other, and regularly, each day, we got into a tangle at the door, which was too narrow for all of us.

"Matushka" presided at dinner, and the conversation proceeded with dignified sobriety and not a little solemnity. The few simple words that my husband and I exchanged made an agreeable contrast to the stiffness of these dinner-table conferences. Occasionally, disputes arose between mother and son, and they said sarcastic things to one another; I especially enjoyed these disputes and sarcasms, because they served to bring out in all the stronger light the firm and tender love that united them.

After dinner, *maman* went into the drawing-room and sat down in her great arm-chair, rubbed tobacco or cut open the leaves of newly purchased books; while my husband and I would read aloud, or go into the divan-room to the clavichord. We read a great deal during these weeks, but music was our favorite and supreme enjoyment; for each time it touched new chords in our hearts, and, as it were, revealed each of us to the other again. When I played his favorite pieces, he would sit on the divan at the other end of the room, where I could hardly see him, and from very shyness would try to conceal the impression which the music made on him; but often, when he did not expect it, I would jump up from the piano, run over to him, and try to detect on his face the traces of the emotion, an unnatural light and moisture in his eyes, which he tried in vain to hide from me.

Mamasha often wanted to visit us in the drawing-room, but she was afraid of interrupting us, and sometimes, apparently not looking at us, she would pass through the room with a pretended grave and indifferent face; but I knew that she had no reason to go to her room, and so would quickly return.

In the evening I poured tea in the great drawing-room, and once more all the people of the house gathered at the table. This solemn seat of ceremony before the polished samovar, and the distribution of the glasses and cups, for a long time filled me with trepidation. It seemed to me that I was not yet fitted for this responsibility, that I was too young and frivolous to turn the tap of the big samovar, to put the glass on the butler's salver, and say, "For Piotr Ivanovitch," "For Marya Minitchna, and ask her if it is weak enough," and to put in the lumps of sugar for the nurse and the servants.

"Splendid, splendid," my husband used often to say, "just like a grown-up lady!" and this confused me more than ever.

After tea, *maman* played patience, or heard Marya Minitchna tell fortunes; then she would kiss us and make the sign of the cross over us, and we would retire to our own rooms. Generally, however, we would sit up till midnight, and this was the best and pleasantest part of the day. He would tell me about his past; we would make plans. Sometimes we would discuss philosophy, and do our best to talk low so as not to be heard up-stairs, and that no suspicion of it might reach Tatyana Semyonovna, who believed in early retiring. Sometimes we would be hungry, and go softly down to the sideboard, find some cold supper, provided by Nikita's thoughtfulness, and eat it in my boudoir, by the light of a single candle. He and I lived quite like visitors in this big old mansion, over which brooded the stern spirit of old personified in Tatyana Semyonovna. Not only she, but the servants, the old serving-maids, the furniture, and the paintings, inspired in me a certain respect, a certain awe, and a consciousness that we

were not exactly fitted for such associations, and that it was our duty to live a circumspect and careful sort of existence here.

As I look back on it now, it seems that much must have been really stiff and uncomfortable — that stern, unchangeable order, and that throng of lazy, inquisitive people in the house; but then, at that time, that very restraint gave an additional strength to our love.

Neither he nor I gave the slightest sign that anything displeased us. On the contrary, he would have resolutely shut his eyes to what was disagreeable. Mamenka's valet, Dmitri Sidorof, a great lover of smoking, regularly, each day, while we were in the divan-room, after dinner, went to my husband's library and took tobacco from his drawer; and it was worth while to see with what merry dismay Sergyeï Mikhaïluitch came to me on his tiptoes, and, making a warning gesture with his finger, and winking, pointed to Dmitri Sidorof, who never suspected that he was seen. And, when Dmitri Sidorof went out without noticing us, my husband, in his joy that all had ended so satisfactorily, as in everything else, said that I was charming, and kissed me.

Sometimes, this easy-going way, this forgiving disposition and apparent indifference, were not pleasing to me; I did not realize that I was open to the same fault, and I called it weakness. "Just like a child who does not dare to show his will," I said to myself.

"Ah, my dear," he replied, one time, when I told him how much surprised I was at his weakness, "would it be possible for me to be angry with any one when I am so happy? It is easier for me to let things go than to oppress others; I became convinced of that long ago — and there is no position where it would be impossible to be happy. And we are having such a good time! I cannot be angry; for me now there is no such thing as *bad;* it is only pitiful, and rather amusing. But the main thing is — *le mieux est l'ennemi du bien.* Would you believe me, when I hear the door-bell, or read a letter, or simply when I wake up, I have a feeling of terror. Terror because I must live, lest some change

may take place; for nothing could be better than what is now."

I believed him, but I did not understand him; it was delightful to me, but it seemed to me that it was just as it ought to be; that it could not be otherwise, that it was always so, with all people, and that if elsewhere there were other forms of happiness, they were different, perhaps, but not greater.

Thus passed the two months; winter came, with its cold weather and snowstorms; and, though he was still with me, I began to feel the loneliness, began to feel that life was monotonous, and that it offered neither of us anything new; and that we seemed to be returning forever in our old tracks. He began to busy himself more than before with his own affairs, and to leave me out; and again my former idea came back to me — that he had in his soul an especial world, into which I was not admitted.

His perpetual self-complacency irritated me. I loved him no less than before; I was no less happy in his love. But my love had come to a standstill, and ceased to grow; and now, besides love, a new feeling, of restlessness, began to take possession of my soul.

The continuance of love was very insignificant after the first happiness of finding that I loved him. What I longed for was activity, and not the calmness of a settled life; I wanted emotions, perils, and self-renunciations, instead of thought. I had within me an exuberance of strength, which found no field of activity in our quiet life. I was attacked by storms of melancholy, which I tried to hide from his knowledge, as something naughty, and fits of unnatural tenderness and gayety that frightened him.

He noticed my state of mind even before I did, and proposed that we should go to town; but I begged him not to go, and not to change our way of living, not to destroy our happiness. And, indeed, I was happy; but it tormented me that this happiness caused me no exertion, no sacrifice, when I was tormented by all the potentiality of labor and self-sacrifice. I loved him, and I saw

that I was everything to him; but I wanted all to see our love, I wanted something to come as a stumbling-block in the way of my loving, and still I should have loved him.

My mind and even my feelings were occupied, but there was still above and beyond all that another feeling, that of youth, the necessity for exertion; and these found no scope in our quiet life.

Why did he tell me that we might go to town, when that was the only thing that I wanted? If he had not told me so, perhaps I should have understood that the feeling that tormented me was unwholesome nonsense, and my fault, that the very sacrifice which I was searching for was there before me — in the stifling of this feeling.

The thought that I had the power of saving myself from melancholy by merely going to town constantly recurred to me, in spite of myself, and at the same time it seemed mean and detestable, simply for my own pleasure, to tear him away from all that he loved.

But time passed on, the snow piled up higher and higher above the walls of the house, and we were always and forever alone, alone, and still we were always the same in each other's eyes; but yonder, somewhere, in the brilliancy, in the whirl of life, were throngs of men and women suffering and rejoicing, without a thought of us or our petty existence.

Worse than all was my consciousness that each day the habits of our life were forging it into one definite form, that our sensations were growing dull, and corresponded to the smooth, passionless course of time. In the morning we were cheerful, at dinner deferential, in the evening affectionate.

"To do good!" said I to myself; "it is excellent to do good and to live honorable lives, as he says; we have still time for that, but there is something for which now and now only I have the requisite power."

This was not what I needed; I needed a struggle; what I needed was that feeling should guide life, and not that life should guide feeling. I wanted to go with

him to the edge of an abyss, and say, "Here a step, and I will throw myself over; here a motion, and I have gone to destruction;" and for him, turning pale, to seize me in his strong arms, hold me over it till my heart grew cold within me, and then carry me away wherever he pleased.

This state of affairs had a bad effect on my health, and my nerves began to suffer. One morning it was worse than usual; he came back from the office out of spirits; this was a rare event for him. I immediately noticed it, and asked him what the matter was; but he was not inclined to tell me, saying that it was not worth while. I afterward learned that the police ispravnik had called upon our peasantry, and, out of an unfriendly disposition to my husband, had made illegal claims on them, and threatened them. My husband could not as yet look with any degree of coolness on all this, a merely wretched and impertinent piece of business; he was angry, and therefore he did not wish to talk with me about it. But it seemed to me that he did not want to tell me about it because he considered me still a child, who could not understand what interested him.

I turned from him, said nothing, and sent to invite Marya Minitchna, a visitor of ours, to tea. After tea, which I brought to a most remarkably hasty conclusion, I took Marya Minitchna into the divan-room, and began to talk in a very loud tone about some trifle or other, of absolutely no interest to me. He walked about the room, and from time to time looked at us. These glances of his had such a peculiar effect on me that I had all the time a stronger and stronger inclination to talk and even to be merry; everything that I said, as well as everything that Marya Minitchna said, seemed to me ludicrous. Without saying anything to me, he went off to his library and closed the door behind him.

As soon as he was out of hearing, all my gayety suddenly vanished, so that Marya Minitchna was struck by it, and asked me what was the matter.

Without answering her, I sat down on a divan, and felt a strong inclination to cry.

"And what does he think of this performance?" I asked myself. "Some trifle which seems important to him; but just let him try to tell me, I will show him that it's all nonsense. No, he must think that I have no sense; he must needs humiliate me with his majestic calmness, and always be so superior to me. But I am as right as he is, though it is so stupid and dull here, though I have such a desire to live and stir about," I said to myself, "and not to stay always in one place, and feel how time is passing. I want to advance, and every day, every hour, I want something new; but he wants to stand stock-still, and hold me back too. And how easy it would be for him. For this it is not necessary to take me to town; it needs only for him to be like me, not to make a display, not to put checks on one's self, but simply to live. This is the very advice he gave me, but he himself does not follow it. That's what the trouble is!"

I felt that my heart was filling with tears, and that I was angry with him. This exhibition of temper alarmed me, and I went to him. He was sitting in his library writing. When he heard my steps, he glanced up for a moment calmly and indifferently, and went on with his writing. This look of his displeased me; instead of going to him, I stood by the table at which he was writing, and, opening a book, I began to turn the leaves of it. Once more he stopped and looked at me.

"Masha!" said he, "are you out of sorts?"

I answered with a chilling glance, which said, "What makes you ask? — mere curiosity?"

He shook his head, with a sweet, affectionate smile; but for the first time I did not give him an answering smile.

"What has been the trouble with you to-day?" I asked. "Why would n't you tell me?"

"A mere trifle, a slight unpleasantness," he replied. "However, I can tell you now. Two peasants have been summoned to town." ....

But I did not give him a chance to finish his story.

"Why did n't you tell me this when I asked you at tea?"

"I should have made some foolish remark, for I was angry then."

"But then was the time that I wanted to know."

"Why?"

"Because you think that I can never be of any help to you."

"What is that?" he exclaimed, throwing down his pen. "I think that I cannot live without you. You not only help me in everything, but you do everything. How did you get such an idea!" he cried, laughing. "I live only for you. Everything seems good to me. I am happy simply because you are here, because you need...."

"Yes, I know that I am a dear child, who needs to be calmed," said I, in such a tone that he was amazed, and, apparently for the first time noticing what a state of mind I was in, gazed at me. "I don't want calmness; you have enough, quite enough for us both," I added.

"Well, now you see what the trouble was," he began hurriedly, interrupting me, apparently fearing to let me say all that I had in mind. "How should you decide the question?"

"I don't want to now," I replied. Though I had a strong desire to hear him, still I took a keen delight in disturbing his equanimity. "I don't want to play at life, I want to live," said I, "just as you do."

Over his face, which always answered so readily and quickly to every emotion, passed an expression of pain and earnest attention.

"I want to live in the same way as you do, on an equality with you."....

But words failed me, such grief, such deep grief, was expressed in his face. He was silent for a little.

"Yes; but you do live on an equality with me, don't you?" he asked; "except that I and not you have to deal with police ispravniks and drunken peasants."....

"No, not in this thing alone," I said.

"For God's sake, understand me, my love," he went on to say. "I know that it is always painful for us to

have anxieties; I have had experience of life, and I know this. I love you, and really I cannot help wishing to save you from anxiety. My life consists in this — in love for you; and so don't disturb my life."

"You are always right!" I cried, not looking at him.

I felt annoyed that his soul had again become clear and calm, when mine was still filled with vexation and a feeling like repentance.

"Masha! what is the matter with you?" he exclaimed. "The question is not whether I am right or you are right, but something quite different; what have you to complain of against me? Don't speak rashly, think it all over, and tell me all that you have in your mind. You are angry with me, and of course you must have good reason, but do let me understand wherein I am to blame."

But how could I tell him what was in my soul? The very fact that he understood me so immediately, that I was again like a child before him, that I could not do anything without his understanding all about it and even foreseeing it, — all this made me still more indignant.

"I have nothing at all to complain of against you," said I. "Simply everything seems tedious to me, and I do not wish it to be so. But you say it must be so, and there again you are right."

I said this and did not look at him. I attained my purpose: his calmness disappeared; pain and apprehension were in his face.

"Masha!" he exclaimed in a low, agitated voice, "this is no trifling matter, what you are doing now to me. Now our fate is being decided. I beg of you not to reply to me, but to listen. Why do you want to torture me?" ....

But I interrupted him.

"I know that you are right. You had better not speak; you are right," said I, coldly, as if it were not myself, but an evil spirit which spoke in me.

"If you knew what you were doing!" said he, in a trembling voice.

I burst into tears, and it gave me relief. He sat near me, and said nothing. I was sorry for him, and ashamed of myself, and vexed at what I had done. I did not look at him. I had an impression that he must be looking at me, either sternly or in perplexity, at that moment. I looked up; his sweet, affectionate glance was fixed on me as if asking my forgiveness. I seized his hand, and said: —

"Forgive me! I myself did not know what I was saying."

"Yes; but I know what you said, and that what you said was the truth."

"What?" I asked.

"We must go to Petersburg," said he. "There is nothing for us to do here now."

"Just as you please," I replied.

He took me in his arms and kissed me.

"Forgive me!" he murmured; "I was to blame toward you."

That evening I played a long time to him, and as he walked up and down the room, he kept repeating something. He had the habit of whispering, and I often asked him what he was saying; and he always, after a little thought, told me pretty nearly what he was repeating; generally poetry, and sometimes awful rubbish, but I was enabled by it to tell how he felt in his mind.

"What are you repeating to yourself?" I asked.

He stopped walking, and after a little thought, he smiled, and repeated two lines by Learmontof: —

"But he, insensate, begged for tempests, ...
As if in tempests peace were found." ....

"No! he is more than a man; he knows everything," said I to myself. "How is it possible not to love him?"

I jumped up, took his arm, and began to walk with him, trying to keep step.

"Well?" he asked, with a smile, looking at me.

"Well," I replied, in a whisper; and a strangely

merry frame of mind took possession of both of us; and, taking longer and longer steps, and standing higher and higher on our tiptoes, and with the same step, to the great indignation of Grigori, and to the amazement of mamasha, who was playing patience in the reception-room, we rushed through all the rooms, into the dining-room, and there we stopped, looking at each other, and burst into hearty laughter.

At the end of a fortnight, just before Christmas, we were in Petersburg.

CHAPTER II

Our journey to Petersburg, our week in Moscow, his relatives and mine, our settling down in new quarters, the road, strange cities, faces, — all this went by like a dream. It was all so varied, so new, and so gay, it was all so warm and brightly lighted by his forethought, his love, that the quiet country existence seemed long past and insignificant.

To my great amazement, instead of worldly pride and coolness, which I had expected to find in society people, I was met by all with such sincere affection and heartiness — not only my relatives but also strangers — that it seemed as if I were their principal preoccupation, as if they had been only waiting for me to have their happiness complete. Unexpectedly, also, my husband discovered many acquaintances in the circle of society which seemed to be the best of all; he had never spoken to me of them, and I had often thought it strange, and not altogether pleasant, to hear him pass such harsh judgments on some of these people, who seemed to me so nice. I could not understand why he was so curt in his treatment of them, and why he tried to avoid many acquaintances whom I liked. It seemed to me the more intimately acquainted you become with good people the better, and they were all good.

"Well, you see how we are situated," said he, before we left the country. "Here we are little Crœsuses, but

there we shall be very far from rich; and so we can stay in town only till Easter, and not go into society, otherwise we shall get into trouble; yes, and for your sake, I should n't wish...."

"Why society?" I asked. "Only let us go to the theater, see our relatives, hear the opera and good music, and we will return to the country even before Easter."

But as soon as we reached Petersburg these plans were forgotten. I found myself suddenly in such a new, delightful world, I was occupied with so many pleasures, such new interests rose up before me, that I forthwith, though quite unconsciously, recanted all the past, and all the plans that I had made.

"All that was such nonsense! I had not even begun to live; this is the real life! yes, what more is there in store for us?" I asked myself.

The restlessness and moods of melancholy which had disquieted me in the country suddenly and entirely disappeared like magic. My love for my husband became calmer; and here the thought that my husband's love might be growing less never occurred to me. Yes, and I could not doubt his love; my every thought was immediately understood, my every feeling divined, my every desire fulfilled by him. His excessive calmness here disappeared, or, at least, no longer annoyed me.

Moreover, I was conscious that he was even more in love with me than before. Often, after making a call on a new acquaintance, or after having had company at our own apartments, when I, inwardly trembling for fear lest I should commit some blunder, fulfilled the duties of a hostess, he would say:—

"*Ai da!* little girl, famous! don't be worried! truly it was capital!"

And I was very happy. Soon after our arrival, he wrote to his mother, and, when he called me to add a line, he was not willing for me to read what he had written; but afterward, of course, I had my way and read it.

"You would not know Masha," he wrote. "And I

myself hardly know her. Where did she get this gentle, gracious self-confidence, her *affableness*, her clever wit, and her sweetness? And it is all so simple, so gentle, so kindly. Every one is enthusiastic about her, and I myself cannot love her enough, even if it were possible to love her more."

"Ah! so that is what I am, is it?" I said to myself; and I felt so happy and good, and it even seemed to me that I loved him more than ever.

My success with all our acquaintances was entirely unexpected to me. On every side I heard that I had immensely pleased this uncle, that there a certain aunt was quite crazy over me; one person told me that there were no such women as I was in all Petersburg; another assured me that it was within my power to be the most exquisite woman in society. More than all, my husband's cousin, the Princess D., an elderly society lady, who had taken a sudden fondness for me above all, told me the most flattering things, which quite turned my head. When, for the first time, this cousin invited me to go to a ball, and asked my husband's consent, he turned to me, with a slightly crafty smile, and asked if I wanted to go. I nodded my head in sign of assent, and was conscious that I blushed.

"The culprit confesses what she wants," said he, with a good-natured laugh.

"Yes, but you said that it would be impossible for us to go into society, and that you did not like it," I replied, smiling, and looking at him with a supplicating glance.

"If you would like very much to go, then we will," said he.

"Truly, nothing could be better."

"So you would like to go? Very much?" he asked again.

I made no reply.

"Society is not a great misfortune in itself," he went on to say, "but the unattainable ambitions of the world are bad and unworthy. Certainly we must go, and we will!" said he, firmly, in conclusion.

"To tell you the truth," said I, "there is nothing in the world that I was so anxious for as to go to this ball."

We went, and the enjoyment that I experienced exceeded all my expectations. At the ball, it seemed to me, more than ever, that I was the center around which everything revolved; that it was for my sake alone that the great drawing-room was lighted up, the music played, and all this throng of people, admiring me, was gathered together. All, from the hair-dresser and chambermaid to the young men who danced and the old men who promenaded through the ball-room, it seemed to me, spoke to me and made me feel that they liked me. The general consensus of opinion in regard to me at that ball, and reported to me by the Princess D., agreed in this: that I was quite unlike any other woman; that there were a peculiar rustic simplicity and charm about me.

This triumph so elated me that I coolly told my husband how much I should like to go to two or three more balls this year, "so as to be satisfied for once," I added, acting against my conscience.

My husband consented, and the first time went with me with apparent willingness, being pleased with my success, and, as it seemed, entirely forgetting or disavowing what he had said before.

At last he evidently began to grow tired of it, and to be weary of the life that we led. But such was not the case with me; even if I noticed occasionally his significantly serious look fixed questioningly on me, I affected to ignore its meaning. I was so carried away by this suddenly kindled liking that all these strangers seemed to show me, by this atmosphere of elegance, these pleasures and novelties, which I now for the first time in my life experienced, — his moral influence, restraining me, seemed so suddenly to disappear; it was so agreeable to me to feel that in this new world I was not only on an equality with him, but even stood on a higher footing, and therefore could love him more and deeper than before, — that I could not understand how he could find

anything unpleasant for me in worldly life. I experienced a new feeling of pride and self-respect when, on entering the ball-room, all eyes were turned upon me; but he, apparently feeling ashamed to lay claim to me before all that throng, made haste to leave me, and disappeared in the black mass of dress-coats.

"Just wait," I often thought. "Wait till we go home, and then you will find out, and know for whose sake I have striven to be handsome and brilliant, and whom I love out of all those that have surrounded me this evening."

It really seemed to me that I rejoiced at my successes, merely for the sake of being in the condition of sacrificing them to him.

One way, I thought, in which this society life might be injurious to me was the possibility that I might fascinate some of the men who met me in society, and arouse my husband's jealousy; but he had such a firm confidence in me, he seemed so calm and equable, and all these young men seemed to me so insignificant in comparison with him, that the only danger in society, as far as my observation went, was not alarming to me. But still, the attentions of many of these young men in society added to my conceit, fanned my selfishness, caused me to reflect that there was considerable merit in my love toward my husband, and made my behavior toward him more independent and perhaps careless.

"Ah! I saw how you had a very lively conversation with N. N.," said I, one time, as we were returning from a ball; and threatened him with my finger, mentioning by name one of the best-known ladies of Petersburg, with whom he had really been talking that evening. I said this in order to stir him up, because he was extraordinarily silent and depressed.

"Ah! why say such a thing? And for you to say it, Masha!" he muttered, through his teeth, and frowning as if from physical pain. "How little this concerns you and me! Leave that to others; these false relations have the power of destroying our peace of mind, and I still hope that the reality will return."

I was ashamed, and said nothing.

"Will it return, Masha? What do you think?" he asked.

"It never has been destroyed, and never will be destroyed," said I; and at that time it really seemed to me that such was the case.

"God grant that it may not!" he exclaimed. "For then it would be time for us to return to the country."

But this was the only time that he spoke so to me; the rest of the time it seemed to me that he was enjoying himself as much as I was, and I was so happy and gay. If sometimes he felt the sense of tedium, I consoled myself by thinking how bored I had been for his sake in the country.

"If our relations are somewhat altered, then all will be the same as before as soon as summer comes and we are again alone with Tatyana Semyonovna, in our home at Nikolskoye."

Thus for me the winter passed imperceptibly away, and, contrary to our plans, we spent Easter-tide also in Petersburg. The following week, just as we were all ready to start, — everything was packed up, and my husband, having purchased various gifts, and flowers and articles for home use in the country, was in a remarkably gay and affectionate mood, — his cousin, the Princess D., came to see us, and began to urge us to stay until Saturday, so as to go to the Countess R.'s reception. She declared that the Countess R. was very anxious to have me be present, and that Prince[1] M., who was at that time in Petersburg, and, ever since the last ball, had wished to make my acquaintance, was going to the rout simply for this, and insisted that I was the most beautiful woman in Russia. The whole city was going to be there, and, in one word, it would n't be anything if I did not go.

My husband was at the other end of the drawing-room, engaged in conversation with some one.

[1] *Prinz*, of a royal family; not *kniaz*, which, though ordinarily translated prince, is a Russian title so common through inheritance as to lose significance. — Ed.

"Well, you will come, will you not, Marie?" asked our cousin.

"We were going to the country, day after to-morrow," I replied doubtfully, and looked at my husband. Our eyes met; he turned hastily away.

"I will tell him to stay," said our cousin. "And we will go Saturday and turn all heads. What?"

"But this would upset all our plans, and besides, we are all packed," I replied, beginning to yield a little.

"Yes, it would be better for her to go and pay her respects to the prince this evening," said my husband, from the end of the room, in a repressed tone of indignation, which I had never before heard from him.

"Ah! he is jealous; now I see it for the first time," remarked our cousin. "But you see, I am not trying to persuade her for the sake of the prince, Sergyeĭ Mikhaĭlovitch, but for all of us. How anxious the Countess R. is to have her come!"

"This depends wholly upon her," rejoined my husband, coldly, and went out.

I saw that he was more than usually excited; this troubled me, and so I gave our cousin no definite answer.

Only, as soon as she had gone, I went to my husband. He was walking thoughtfully back and forth, and did not see or hear me when I stole on tiptoe into the room.

"He is recalling his dear Nikolskoye home," I said to myself, as I looked at him. "And the morning coffee, in the bright reception-room, and his fields, and his peasants, and the evenings in the divan-room, and our mysterious midnight suppers. No!" I said to myself, decidedly, "I will sacrifice all the balls in the world, and the flattery of all its princes, for his joyous mood, for his gentle caresses."

I was going to tell him that I was not going to the rout, that I did not care to go, when he suddenly looked up, and, on seeing me, frowned, and the sweetly thoughtful expression of his face changed. Once more, keen sagacity, wisdom, and patronizing calmness appeared in his expression. He was unwilling for me to look on him

simply as a man: it was essential for him always to stand before me like a demi-god on a pedestal.

"What is it you want, my dear?" he asked, turning toward me with calm indifference.

I made no reply. It vexed my very soul to have him wear a mask before me, to have him unwilling to be as I liked him best.

"So you would like to stay till Saturday and go to the rout?" he asked.

"I did want to, but I see that it does not suit you. Besides, we are all packed," I added.

Never before had he looked at me so coldly, never before had he spoken to me so coldly.

"I am not going till Tuesday, and I will have the things unpacked," he said; "so you can go if you would like. You will please do me the favor of going. I shall not leave town."

As always when he was agitated, he began to stride up and down the room, and he did not look at me.

"I really do not understand you," said I, without moving from where I stood, and following him with my eyes. "You say that you are always so calm." (He had never said such a thing.) "Why do you speak to me so strangely? For your sake I was ready to deprive myself of this pleasure, and you speak to me in such a sarcastic tone, in such a way as you have never spoken with me before, and compel me to go."

"Well, now! You make a *sacrifice* of yourself" (he laid a special stress on that word), "and I make a sacrifice of myself; which is better? A contest of magnanimity! Such is the basis of *family happiness*, is it not?"

This was the first time I had heard him make use of such bitterly sarcastic words. And his sarcasm did not touch me, but rather offended me; and the bitterness did not frighten me, but hardened me. Could it be that *he* said such things, he who always feared formality in our relations, he who was always so simple and true?

And for what reason?

Simply because I wanted to sacrifice for him a pleas-

ure in which I could see no harm, and because a moment before this I had understood and loved him so! Our *rôles* were exchanged; he avoided my simple and straightforward words, and I was in search of them.

"You have changed very much," I said, with a sigh. "What crime have I been guilty of, in your eyes? It is not this reception, but some old grudge that you have in your heart against me! Why this lack of frankness? Once you did not avoid it. Speak honestly, and tell me what fault you have to find with me." "What will he say to this?" I asked myself, remembering, with self-congratulation, that not once during the winter had he had cause to find fault with me.

I went into the middle of the room, so that he would have to pass close by me, and I looked at him. "He will come to me, he will take me into his arms, and that will be the end of it," I thought, and I even began to feel sorry that I should not have the chance to show him how much in the wrong he was. But he paused at the end of the room, and looked at me.

"So you still don't understand me?" he asked.

"No."

"Well, then, I will explain to you. The feeling that I have, and cannot help having, is nasty; and 't is the first time I ever felt so."....

He paused, evidently startled by the harsh sound of his voice.

"Well, what is it?" I asked, with tears of indignation in my eyes.

"It is nasty that this prince thinks you are beautiful, and because you are, therefore, eager to make his acquaintance; forgetting your husband, and your own self, and your dignity as a woman, and because you are unwilling to understand what your husband must feel for you, if you have no sense of your dignity as a woman; on the contrary, you come and tell your husband that you are *sacrificing* yourself; in other words: 'To be presented to his highness is a great honor for me, but I am willing to *sacrifice* it.'"

The longer he spoke, the more excited he became

through the sound of his own voice, for this voice sounded harsh, cutting, and brutal. I had never seen him so, and never expected to see him so. The blood rushed to my heart; I was frightened, but at the same time I was supported by a sense of undeserved injury, and of insulted pride, and I was bound to have my revenge.

"I have been expecting this for a long time," I said. "Go on, go on!"

"I know not what *you* have been expecting," he continued, "but I had good reason to look for the worst, seeing you every day growing more and more absorbed in the vileness, the idleness, the luxury, of this senseless society; and I have expected.... I have expected this very thing which to-day fills me with shame and pain such as I never felt before; pain for myself, when this friend of yours, with her vulgar hands, pried into my heart, and began to talk about jealousy, *my* jealousy!.... and toward whom? a man with whom neither of us is acquainted! And you, as if purposely, have no desire to understand me, and you speak of making a sacrifice for me! Of what?.... And shame on you, shame on your degradation!.... Sacrifice indeed!" he cried.

"Ah! now we see a husband's power," I said to myself, "to insult and humiliate a woman who has not done the slightest thing wrong. This is what it means by a husband's rights, but I won't give in to them."

"No, I will not make any sacrifice for you," I said, feeling how unnaturally my nostrils were dilated, and how the blood was rushing to my face. "I shall most certainly go to the rout Saturday; nothing shall hinder me!"

"Well, God give you much pleasure; but all is at an end between us!" he cried, carried away by uncontrollable rage. "Henceforth you shall not torment me. I was a fool when I...." he began again, but his lips twitched, and he restrained himself by an evident effort from finishing the sentence he had begun.

I was afraid of him and loathed him at that instant. I had many things I wanted to tell him, so as to retali-

ate for his insulting remarks; but if I had opened my lips I should have burst into tears, and lost my dignity before him. I left the room without saying a word. But, as soon as I ceased to hear the sound of his steps, I was overwhelmed by the horror of what we had done. I felt terribly at the thought that the bond on which my happiness depended was torn asunder forever, and I felt strongly drawn to return.

"But is he sufficiently calm," I asked myself, "to understand me, if I should silently stretch out my hand and look at him? Would he understand my magnanimity? What if he should call my grief pretense? Or would he accept my repentance and forgive me, with the consciousness of being in the right, and with proud calmness? And why? Why should he whom I have loved insult me so cruelly?"

I went, not to him, but to my chamber, where I sat long alone, weeping, remembering with horror each word of the conversation that had passed between us, substituting for these words other friendly words, and then again, with dismay and a sense of insult, recalling the whole scene.

When I went to tea in the evening, and met my husband in the presence of S., who was staying with us, I had the consciousness that this day a wide abyss had opened between us. S. asked me when we were going.

Before I had time to reply, my husband said: —

"Next Tuesday. We are going to the rout at the Countess R.'s. You intend to go, do you not?" he asked, turning to me.

I was terrified at the sound of this simple question, and looked timidly at my husband. His eyes were fixed directly upon me; their expression was angry and sarcastic; his voice was steady and cold.

"Yes," I replied.

In the evening, when we were alone, he came to me, and, holding out his hand, "Please forget what I said to you," said he.

I took his hand, a smile trembled over my lips, and

the tears were ready to well up in my eyes; but he withdrew his hand, and, as if he feared a sentimental scene, he sat down in an arm-chair, at some distance from me.

"I wonder if he can consider himself wholly in the right?" I thought, and I was ready for a reconciliation; a request not to go to the rout was on my tongue's end.

"I must write to matushka that we have postponed our return," said he; "otherwise she will be anxious."

"And when do you expect to go?" I asked.

"On Tuesday, after the rout," he replied.

"I hope that you are not doing it on my account," said I, looking into his eyes, but his eyes merely looked, and gave me no reply, as if a veil had been drawn over them between him and me. His face suddenly seemed to me old and disagreeable.

We went to the rout, and, to all appearances, our relations were again most friendly. But really these relations were absolutely unlike what they had been.

At the rout, I was sitting with other ladies, when the prince came to me, and I was obliged to stand up in order to talk with him. As I stood up I involuntarily looked for my husband, and caught sight of him at the other end of the drawing-room. He looked at me and turned away. I suddenly felt such a sense of mortification and pain that I grew painfully confused, and blushed to the roots of my hair under the prince's gaze. But I was compelled to stand and listen to what he said, while he looked down on me.

Our conversation was not of long duration; there was no place for him to sit near me, and he evidently saw that I felt very much constrained. We talked about the last ball, about where I lived in the summer, and other things. As he left me he expressed his desire to make my husband's acquaintance, and I saw them meet and talk with each other at the end of the room. The prince was evidently talking about me, because, in the midst of a sentence, he looked around to where I was and smiled.

My husband's face suddenly flushed; he made a low bow, and turned away from the prince. I also blushed, for I was mortified on account of the remark which the prince had evidently made about me, and especially at my husband. It seemed to me that all must have observed my awkward bashfulness at the time the prince was talking with me, and must have noticed my husband's strange behavior; God knows how they may have interpreted that. Was it possible they knew of my quarrel with my husband?

My cousin brought me home, and on the way we talked about my husband. I could not refrain from telling her everything that had occurred between us because of this unhappy rout. She calmed me, saying that this was a perfectly insignificant misunderstanding, such as were very frequent in married life, and led to no consequences; she explained to me what from her point of view my husband's character was; she declared that he was reticent and proud; I agreed with her, and it seemed to me that I myself began now to have a calmer and better appreciation of him.

But afterward, when my husband and I were alone together again, this judgment of him lay like a crime on my conscience, and I was conscious that the abyss that separated us had grown wider than ever.

CHAPTER III

Henceforth, our life and relations underwent a complete change. It was no longer so pleasant as before to be alone together. There were questions which we avoided, and it was easier for us to talk in the presence of a third person than when by ourselves.

Whenever the talk turned on country life or a ball, we felt that we were treading on dangerous ground,[1] and we avoided each other's eyes.

We both seemed to feel where lay the abyss which separated us, and tried to avoid falling into it.

[1] Russ: "As it were, little boys ran in our eyes."

I was persuaded that he was proud and passionate, and that it was necessary to be on my guard not to irritate him. He was persuaded that I could not live without society, that the country was not to my mind, and that it was necessary to give in to this unhappy taste. And we both avoided direct reference to these subjects, and each judged the other falsely.

We had both ceased long ago to be in each other's eyes the most perfect people in the world, but made comparisons with others, and secretly criticized each other.

I became ill before we left Petersburg, and, instead of going to the country, we took a *datcha* or summer place near the city, and my husband went alone to see his mother. When he went, I was sufficiently recovered to go with him, but he insisted that I should stay behind, alleging, as an excuse, that he was afraid for my health. I felt that, in reality, he had no fear about my health, but was afraid that we should not be happy in the country.

I was not very urgent, and I stayed behind. Without him it was dull and lonely, but when he came back I discovered that he did not bring into my life what he had once brought. Our former relations, when every thought unshared with him caused the impression of being guilty of a crime, when every act, every word of his, seemed to me the model of perfection, when from very joy, in looking at each other, we felt like laughing at every little thing, — these relations passed so insensibly into others that we could not tell what had become of them.

Each of us had separate interests and occupations, which we no longer thought of sharing. It even began to seem no longer mortifying that we each had our own special world, from which the other was excluded. We became used to this idea, and at the end of a year "the boys ceased to run in our eyes" when we looked at each other.

His boyish fits of gayety, in which we shared, entirely ceased; his lenience, and his indifference to everything,

which formerly troubled me, disappeared; that significant glance, which once confused and delighted me, was seen no more; no longer did we share in our prayers and our enthusiasms; and indeed it now happened that we saw little of each other; he was constantly away on journeys, and he had no fear or regret at leaving me alone; I went constantly into society where I had no need of him.

We had no more scenes or open quarrels, and I endeavored to satisfy his requirements; he fulfilled all my desires, and, to all outward appearance, we still loved each other.

When we were together, which happened rarely, I had no sensation of pleasure, or emotion, or confusion, any more than as if I were alone. I knew very well that he was my husband and not a stranger, but a worthy man, — my husband, whom I knew as well as myself.

I was persuaded that I could foretell all that he would do or say, and how he would look at any matter; and if his actions or views disappointed my expectations, then it seemed to me that he was mistaken.

I had nothing to expect from him; in a word, he was my husband, and that was all. It seemed to me that this was so, and inevitably so; that there never could be, and never had been, other relations between us.

When he went away, especially at first, I felt terribly lonely; when deprived of his support, I realized, as never before, the meaning of it; when he returned, I would throw myself into his arms with joy, and yet within two hours I had entirely forgotten this joy; it quite passed out of my memory, and I had nothing to say to him.

Only in these quiet, sober moments of affection, which we sometimes had, it seemed to me that there was something wrong, that there was a pain in my heart, and it seemed to me that I read the same in his eyes. I felt that this affection had a limit, beyond which, it seemed to me, he had no desire and I no power to go. Sometimes I felt some regret, but I never allowed myself

time to meditate on the reason for it; and I tried to forget this vague melancholy, by plunging into all the diversions which were always within my reach.

Society life, which from the very first had dazzled me with its brilliancy and its power of flattering my conceit, quickly attained complete ascendancy over my inclinations, and became a second habit with me, and imposed its fetters on me, and usurped in my mind all the place to which feeling was rightfully entitled.

I never stayed by myself alone, and I was afraid to look my position fairly in the face. All my time, from my waking hour, late in the morning, till I went to bed, late at night, was full, and, even when I did not go out, there was something to occupy me. I was neither happy nor unhappy; but it seemed to me that it must always be this way, and never change.

Thus passed three years, and our relations remained the same; it seemed as if everything remained stationary, congealed, and unable to change, either for the better or the worse.

During these three years of our married life, two important events occurred; but neither of them brought about any change in my life.

They were the birth of my first baby, and the death of Tatyana Semyonovna. At first, the feeling of motherhood took possession of me with such force, and such unexpected exultation welled up in my heart, that I thought a new life was going to begin for me; but after two months, when I was able once more to go out, this feeling, growing weaker and weaker, changed into the habitual and cold fulfilment of duty.

My husband, on the contrary, from the time of the birth of our oldest son, became his old self again, gentle, unruffled, contented with staying at home, and he poured out all his affection and gayety on the child.

Often, when, dressed for some ball, I went into the nursery, to make the sign of the cross over my child, I would find my husband there; I noticed his reproachful and sternly observant glance fixed on me, and my conscience would upbraid me. I would suddenly repent of

my indifference to my child, and ask myself: "Can it be that I am worse than other women?.... But what can I do?" I asked myself. "I love my son, but I cannot spend all my time with him; it would be tiresome, and not for anything in the world would I make a pretense."

His mother's death was a great grief for him; it was hard, as he said, to live without her at Nikolskoye; but, though I also missed her, and sympathized with my husband's sorrow, I found now much more pleasure and comfort in the country.

During all these three years, we lived, for the most part, in the city, spending only two months one summer in the country, and the third year we went abroad.

We spent the summer at the baths.

I was then twenty-one years old; our circumstances were, I supposed, in a flourishing condition; I did not expect from domestic life anything more than it already gave; everybody whom I knew, it seemed to me, was fond of me; my health was excellent; my toilets were the handsomest at the baths; I knew that I was pretty; the weather was lovely, a peculiar atmosphere of beauty and elegance surrounded me, and I felt very light-hearted.

I was not so light-hearted as I used to be at Nikolskoye, when I had the consciousness that I was happy in myself, that I was happy because I deserved to be, that my happiness was great but was capable of being greater, that I longed for still greater joy.

Then it was another thing; but this summer, also, everything was delightful, I had nothing to desire; I had nothing to hope for, I had nothing to fear, and it seemed to me that my life was full and my conscience was untroubled.

Out of all the young men that season there was not one whom I should have singled out for special distinction, or should have preferred, even to old Prince K., our envoy, who paid me great attention.

One was young, another old; there was a fair-haired Englishman, a Frenchman with an imperial — to all of them I felt perfectly indifferent, yet all of them were

indispensable to me. All these faces had the same monotonous lack of distinction, and yet they formed a part of the joyous atmosphere of life which shed its light on me.

Only one of them, an Italian, the Marchese D., attracted my attention more than the others, by his absurd way of showing his admiration of me. He never missed an opportunity of being with me, of selecting me as his partner at the hops, of riding with me, of being at the casino, etc., and of telling me that I was beautiful!

Several times I saw him from our windows, loitering near the house, and often the disagreeable boldness of his brilliant eyes made me blush and turn away.

He was young and handsome and elegant, and, strangely enough, his smile and the expression of his forehead were like my husband's, though vastly more attractive. I was amazed by this resemblance, though on the whole, in his lips, in his eyes, in his long chin, instead of the charming expression of goodness and ideal serenity peculiar to my husband, there was in him something coarse and animal. I surmised then that he was passionately in love with me. I sometimes thought of him with proud pity, I sometimes tried to soothe him, to bring him to a state of quiet, trustful friendship; but he bitterly resented these attempts, and continued unpleasantly to disturb me with his passion, unexpressed, it is true, but ready at any moment to break forth.

Although I did not acknowledge it to myself, I was afraid of this man, and against my will I often thought of him. My husband had made his acquaintance, and treated him with even more coolness and hauteur than the rest of our acquaintances, to whom he was only the husband of his wife.

At the end of the season I was taken ill, and did not leave my room for a fortnight. When, for the first time after my illness, I came out one evening to hear the music, I learned that, while I was housed, the long-expected Lady S., a renowned beauty, had arrived. A group gathered around me, and I was greeted warmly; but a much more interesting circle was attracted around the newly arrived lioness. Every one around me was

talking only about this lady and her beauty. She was pointed out to me, and truly she was charming; but I was disagreably impressed by the conceited expression on her face, and I said so.

This day everything that had before seemed bright and gay was wearisome to me. On the next day, Lady S. arranged an excursion to the castle, but I declined to go. I was almost the only one left behind, and everything had undergone a complete transformation in my eyes. Everybody and everything seemed to me stupid and tiresome; I felt like crying, and I wanted to finish the baths as soon as possible and return to Russia.

At the bottom of my heart there was a strange wicked feeling, but still I would not acknowledge it to myself. I pretended that I was ill, and ceased to go into large gatherings; only, in the morning, occasionally, I went out to drink the waters, or, with L. M., a Russian lady of our acquaintance, rode into the suburbs. My husband was absent at this time, having gone to Heidelberg for a few days, until I should have finished the course of treatment, when he would return and take me back to Russia.

Once Lady S. had invited all the people of our circle to go on some pleasure excursion, but L. M. and I, after dinner, drove to the castle. While we slowly drove along in our carriage, over the winding highway, between the century-old chestnut trees, through which could be seen far away those exquisitely beautiful suburbs of Baden, bathed in the rays of the setting sun, we conversed seriously, as we had never done before. L. M., though I had known her long, now for the first time appeared to me as a beautiful, intelligent woman, with whom one might safely indulge in confidences, and with whom it was delightful to be on friendly terms.

We talked about our families, our children, and the emptiness of Baden life; we both longed to get back to Russia, to our country homes, and we fell into a mood at once pleasurable and melancholy.

Under the influence of these serious thoughts and feelings, we went into the castle. Within the walls it

was shady and cool; above our heads the sunlight played on the ruins.

We heard steps and voices.

Through the gate, as in a frame, we could see that charming view of Baden, which, nevertheless, to us Russians, seems so cold. We sat down to get breath, and in silence looked at the sunset.

The voices grew louder, and I thought that I heard my name mentioned. My attention was attracted, and I could not help hearing every word that they said. I knew the voices; they were the Marchese D. and a French friend of his whom I also knew. They were talking about *me* and Lady S.

The Frenchman was making comparisons between us, and descanting on our respective charms. He said nothing derogatory, and yet the blood rushed to my heart when I heard what he said. He entered into an elaborate eulogy of what was beautiful in me and in Lady S. I was the mother of a child already, but Lady S. was only nineteen; my hair was prettier, but, on the other hand, Lady S. had a more graceful figure; Lady S. was of high birth, while your friend, said he, "is nothing but one of those petty Russian princesses who are beginning to flock here in such numbers."

He concluded with the observation that I had done excellently well not to enter the lists as Lady S.'s rival, and that my day was practically over, as far as Baden was concerned.

"I am sorry for her..... Unless, indeed, she should take it into her head to console herself with you," he added, with a gay and cruel laugh.

"If she should go, I should follow her," rudely exclaimed the voice with the Italian accent.

"Happy mortal! he can still love," sneered the Frenchman.

"Love!" exclaimed the Italian, and then paused..... "I cannot help loving! Without love there is no life. To turn life into a romance, this is the one thing that is beautiful. And my romance never breaks off in the middle, and this one I shall carry out to the very end."

"*Bonne chance, mon ami!*" said the Frenchman.

We did not hear any more, because they passed around the corner, and soon their steps sounded on the other side. They came down-stairs, and in a moment or two they entered through a side door, and stopped in amazement to see us. I blushed when the marchese joined me, and felt terribly when, as we came out of the castle, he offered me his arm. I could not refuse it, and he and I followed L. M., who started for the carriage under the escort of his friend.

I was mortified at what the Frenchman had said about me, though in my heart of hearts I recognized that he had only expressed my own convictions; but the marchese's words had surprised and disturbed me by their audacity. I was tormented by the thought that I had overheard what he said; and yet it did not in the least make him abashed to see me. I felt annoyed to have him so close to me; and, without looking at him, without answering him, and trying to take his arm in such a way as not to hear his words, I hurried after L. M. and the Frenchman.

The marchese said something about the exquisite view, about the unexpected pleasure of meeting me, and many other things still; but I did not heed what he said. I was thinking at this moment of my husband, of my son, of Russia; somehow I felt a strange sense of shame and pity and longing; I was anxious to get home as quickly as possible, and go to my lonely room in the Hôtel de Bade in order to think at leisure over all that had so suddenly arisen in my soul. But L. M. went slowly; it was still quite a distance to the carriage; my cavalier, it seemed to me, stubbornly slackened his steps, with the express purpose of keeping me back.

"This must not be!" I said to myself, and tried hard to walk faster. But he actually detained me, and even pressed my arm. L. M. disappeared around a turn, and we were left absolutely alone. I was overwhelmed with terror.

"Excuse me," said I, coldly, and tried to disengage my arm, but the lace on my sleeve caught on one of

his buttons. Bending over, he tried to detach it, and his ungloved fingers touched my hand. A strange, new feeling, of horror and of pleasure blended, made a cold shiver run down my back. I looked at him with the intention of expressing, by a cutting glance, all the contempt I felt for him; but my eyes failed to express that; they expressed only apprehension and agitation.

His moist, burning eyes, in close proximity to my face, looked passionately at me, at my neck, at my bosom, his two hands clasped my arm above the wrist, his parted lips said something — were uttering a declaration of love, were vowing that I was all the world to him, and his lips drew closer to mine, and his hands pressed mine more firmly, and seemed to burn me!

Fire flashed through my veins, a cloud came into my eyes, I trembled, and the words with which I intended to restrain him stuck in my throat. Suddenly I felt a kiss on my cheek, and, all of a tremble, and cold, I paused and looked at him. Without the power of speech or motion, terrified, I waited and longed, for — what?

All this lasted but a second. But this second was terrible. I seemed to have such a complete view of the man in that time. His face was so plain to me; his low, curved brow, showing under his straw hat, and looking like my husband's; his handsome, straight nose, with dilated nostrils; his long mustaches, twisted to a point, and his imperial, his smooth-shaven cheeks, and his sunburned neck. I detested him, I feared him, so foreign he appeared to me! But at that moment how powerfully I was under the influence of the emotion and passion of that hateful stranger!

I had such an irresistible desire to return the kiss of his bold and handsome mouth, the pressure of those white hands with their delicate veins and with the rings on the fingers! So strongly tempted was I to throw myself headlong into the abyss of forbidden delights suddenly yawning before me. ....

"I am so unhappy," I said to myself. "So why not let an unhappiness still greater and more hopeless accumulate on my head!"

He threw one arm around me, and bent his face down to mine.

"Why not let still greater shame and sin accumulate on my head!"

"*Je vous aime*," he whispered, in a voice which was so like my husband's!

My husband and child recurred to my memory as dear objects loved in other days, long ago, and now forever disconnected with my life.

But suddenly, at this instant, we heard L. M.'s voice at the turn of the path, calling me. I came to my senses, tore myself away from his arms, and, without looking at him, almost ran after L. M. We took our seats in the carriage, and I scarcely deigned to give him a parting glance. He took off his hat and asked some question with a smile. He could not understand the inexpressible loathing which I felt for him at that moment.

My life seemed to me so unhappy, my future so hopeless, my past so dark! L. M. spoke to me, but I did not heed her words. It seemed to me that she was talking only out of pity, in order to hide the contempt which she felt for me. In each word, in each glance, I detected her scorn and insulting pity. That shameful kiss burned on my cheek; the thoughts of my husband and my boy were unendurable.

Alone in my room, I hoped to be able to comprehend my situation, but it was terrible to me to be alone. I could not drink the tea which was brought to me, and, without knowing why, with feverish haste I immediately began to pack up so as to take the evening train to Heidelberg, where my husband was.

When I was safely seated with my maid in the empty carriage, and the engine had started, and the cool breeze blew in on me through the window, I began to come to myself, and more clearly to realize my past and my future.

All my married life, from the day of our arrival at Petersburg, suddenly appeared before me in a new light, and lay like a burden on my conscience. For the first time I had a lively recollection of our early married life

in the country, and our plans. For the first time the question came into my mind: "How has he been enjoying himself during all these months?"

And I felt that I was guilty toward him.

"But why did he not stop me? Why has he played the hypocrite before me? Why has he avoided any reconciliation? Why has he insulted me?" I asked myself. "Why, why did he not exercise the power of his love over me? Or has he not really loved me?"

But, however much he had been to blame, another man's kiss had been imprinted on my cheek, and I still felt it.

The nearer and nearer I came to Heidelberg, the more distinctly I saw my husband in my imagination, and the more I dreaded the approaching meeting.

"I will tell him all, all, I will weep tears of repentance," I thought, "and he will forgive me."

But I myself did not know what this "all" was that I should tell him, and I myself did not believe that he would forgive me.

As soon as I entered my husband's room, and saw his calm though astonished face, I felt that I had nothing to tell him, no acknowledgment to make, and nothing for which to ask his forgiveness. My inexpressible grief and rue were still to be kept in my own secret heart.

"What made you think of doing this?" he asked. "I was intending to join you to-morrow."

But, looking more closely into my face, he seemed to be alarmed.

"What is the matter? What is there wrong?" he exclaimed.

"Nothing," I insisted, with difficulty repressing my tears. "I have come away for good. Let us go home to Russia to-morrow."

He looked at me attentively for some time, without speaking.

"Come, now, tell me what has happened to you," he said.

I could not help blushing, and cast down my eyes. His eyes flashed angrily, as from a sense of injury. I

was alarmed at the suspicion that he might have, and, with a power of dissimulation which was quite unexpected even to myself, I said: —

"Nothing has happened; I simply became bored and melancholy at being alone, and I got to thinking much about our life and about you. How long I have been to blame toward you! What made you come with me where you had no desire to come? I have been to blame toward you," I repeated, and again the tears welled up in my eyes. "Let us go to the country and stay there."

"O dear! spare us sentimental scenes," said he, coldly. "It is well that you are willing to go to the country, because we are short of money; but, as for staying there, that is a delusion. I know that would not suit you. But now have a little tea, you will feel better," said he, in conclusion, getting up to call his man.

I imagined all that passed through his mind, and I felt humiliated by the terrible ideas which his incredulous and evidently censuring glance made me know that he had conceived in regard to me. No, he could not and would not understand me!

I said that I would go and see my child, and left him. All I wanted was to be alone and to weep, weep, weep. ....

CHAPTER IV

The long-uninhabited, empty house at Nikolskoye came to life again, but what had once been alive in it could not come to life again. Mamasha was no more, and my husband and I were alone there, face to face. But now being alone was not only not desirable, but it was irksome to us. The winter passed all the more gloomily for me because I was ill, and my health was not restored until after the birth of my second son.

The relations between my husband and me continued to be the same, coldly amicable, just as when we lived

in the city; but in the country every floor, every wall, the divan, reminded me of what he had once been for me, and of what I had lost. It seemed as if an unforgiven offense separated us, as if he were punishing me for something and pretending not to notice that he was doing so. To ask forgiveness was useless, what was there to ask mercy for? he punished me only by not giving me all of himself, all of his soul as before; but he never gave it to any one or to anything. So that it might have been thought it was lacking in him.

Sometimes it occurred to me that he only pretended to be what he was for the sake of torturing me, but that in reality his old feeling still existed, and I tried to bring it out. But every time it seemed as if he avoided all frankness, as if he suspected me of duplicity and feared any sentimentality as something ridiculous. His look and voice seemed to say: "I know all, I know all; there is nothing to say; I know what you mean. And I know too that you talk one way and act another."

At first I was offended at this fear of frankness, but afterward I became wonted to the idea that it was not frankness, but lack of any necessity for frankness. My tongue would not have been tempted now to tell him impulsively that I loved him, or to ask him to read the prayers with me, or to invite him to hear me play.

We felt ourselves subject to the rules of conventional propriety. We each lived separate existences. He with his own occupations, in which I had now no need or wish to share; I with my idle amusements, which did not humiliate and pain him as once they did. Our children were still too young to be able to reconcile us.

But the spring came. Katya and Sonya returned to the country for the summer; our house at Nikolskoye was undergoing repairs, and we moved over to Pokrovskoye. It was the same old mansion with the terrace, with the folding table, and the piano in the bright drawing-room, and my old room with its white curtains and my maidenhood dreams, which seemed to have been forgotten there. In this room stood two little beds; one had once been mine, and here every evening I made the

sign of the cross over my fat, frolicsome little Kokosha;[1] the other was still smaller, and here Vanya's cunning little face peered out of his swaddling-clothes.

After making the sign of the cross over them, I often lingered in the quiet chamber, and suddenly from all the corners, from the walls, from the curtains, would arise the old forgotten dreams of my youth. Old voices began to sing my maidenhood songs. And where were these visions? Where were these dear, sweet songs?

All that I had hardly dared hope for had been realized; vague, confused dreams had taken form; but the reality was a dull, hard, and unhappy life.

Yet all was the same — the same park into which I looked from the window, the same lawn, the same paths, the same bench yonder above the ravine, the same song of the nightingales ringing over from the pond, and the same moon rising over the house; and yet all was so terribly, so hopelessly changed! So cold and cheerless was everything that ought to have been near and dear!

Just as of old, Katya and I sat together in the drawing-room and talked about him. But Katya had grown wrinkled and wan, her eyes no longer gleamed with pleasure and hope, but expressed sympathetic melancholy and grief. We did not go into raptures about him, as we used to do; we criticized him; we did not wonder why it was that we were so happy, and we had no desire, as in old times, to tell the whole world what we thought; like conspirators, we whispered together, and a hundred times we asked each other why such a melancholy change had taken place.

And he too was just the same as always, only the line between his eyes was heavier, there were more gray hairs around his temples, but his deep, thoughtful gaze was constantly veiled from me as by a cloud. And I too was still the same, but there was no longer any love or desire for love in my heart. No necessity for work, no self-content. And how distant and impossible seemed to me my early religious enthusiasms and my former love to him, and my former fullness of life! I could not

[1] Kokosha, diminutive of Konstantin; Vanya, of Ivan.

now comprehend what formerly seemed to me so clear and true, the happiness of living for others. Why live for others when I did not even care to live for myself?

I had entirely given up my music from the day we went to Petersburg; but now the old piano, the old music-books, inspired me with a longing for it.

One day I was not feeling well, and had stayed alone at home. Katya and Sonya had gone with my husband to Nikolskoye to see the improvements. The tea-table was set; I went down-stairs, and, while waiting for their return, I took my seat at the piano. I turned to the *Sonata quasi una Fantasia*, and began to play it. No one was in sight or hearing; the windows into the garden were opened, and the familiar notes, plaintive and solemn, echoed through the room. I finished playing the first movement, and, quite unconsciously, through old habit looked round to the corner in which he used to sit when he listened to me. But he was not there; the chair stood in its place, from which it had never been removed; and from the window I could see the lilac bush against the bright western sky, and the afternoon sunlight pouring in through the open window.

I leaned my elbow on the piano, hid my face in both hands, and was lost in thought. I had been sitting so a long time, recalling, with anguish, the old days which would never return, and thinking with apprehension of the unknown future. But it seemed as if there were only a blank ahead of me, as if I had no expectations and no hope!

"Can it be that my life has been wasted?" I asked myself with horror, lifting my head; and, in order that I might forget and not think, I began once more to play, and the same andante as before.

"God forgive me," I thought, "if I have been at fault; restore to me all that was so beautiful to my soul or teach me what to do! how to live now!"

The noise of wheels was heard on the grass. The carriage stopped in front of the steps; then across the terrace came the familiar, cautious footsteps, and then they ceased. But the old feeling was no longer stirred

in me by the sound of those well-known footsteps. When I had finished, I heard footsteps behind me, and a hand was laid on my shoulder.

"How clever you are to play that sonata," said he.

I made no reply.

"Have n't you had tea?"

I shook my head and did not look at him, lest I should show the traces of emotion remaining in my face.

"They will be in directly; one of the horses was restive, and they are coming on foot from the main road," said he.

"Let us wait for them," said I, and went out on the terrace, hoping that he would follow me; but he asked after the children and went to them.

Once more his presence, his unaffected kindly voice, made me feel that not all was lost.

"What is it that I lack? He is good and kind, a good husband, a good father; I myself do not know what is for my own good."

I went to the balcony and sat down under the awning of the terrace, on the very same bench where I had sat on the day of our engagement. The sun had already set; it was beginning to grow dark, and a black cloud, heavy with a spring shower, was coming up over the house and park; low in the west, through the trees, could be seen a clear space of sky touched with the fading twilight, and the faint golden radiance of the evening star. Over everything lay the shadow of the cloud, and everything was waiting for the gentle vernal shower.

The breeze had died down. Not a leaf, not a grass-blade stirred, the odor of the lilac and wild cherry trees was strong as if all the air were in bloom; it hung over the park and the terrace, and seemed to come in waves, now stronger, now fainter, making you feel like closing your eyes so as to shut out sight and hearing, and revel in this sweet perfume.

The dahlias and rose bushes, not as yet in bloom, stood motionless in the dark, newly turned soil of the flower-beds, and seemed to be slowly growing on their white supports; the frogs, as if making the most of

their opportunity before the rain should drive them into the water, were whistling with loud, cheerful notes down in the ravine. The mellifluous sound of falling waters rose perpetually above their clamor. In the meantime the nightingales were singing, and could be heard flying in alarm from spot to spot. Again this spring one nightingale had tried to build his nest in the bush near the window, and when I went out I listened as he flew beyond the alley, and from there gave one burst of melody and then ceased, also full of longing. In vain I tried to calm myself; I also seemed to be waiting and longing for something.

He came down-stairs and took a seat near me.

"I am afraid they will get wet," said he.

"Yes," said I, and we both were silent for a long time.

The cloud hung lower and lower, though there was no wind; everything had grown more silent, more fragrant, and more motionless; then suddenly a drop fell, and seemed to dance along the canvas awning of the terrace; another fell on the rubble walk, it began to splash on the burdock, and the cool round drops, increasing, began to fall in a smart shower. The nightingale and the frogs entirely ceased; only the mellifluous sound of the falling waters, although it seemed far off beyond the rain, filled the spaces of the air, and some bird, which must have sought shelter under the dry leaves not far from the terrace, at regular intervals repeated its monotonous notes. He got up and started to go away.

"Where are you going?" I asked, detaining him. "It is so pleasant here."

"I ought to send an umbrella and some overshoes," he replied.

"It is n't necessary, it will be over in a moment."

He agreed with me, and we stood together by the parapet of the terrace. I rubbed my hand along the wet, slippery railing, and put my head out over. The cool raindrops irregularly sprinkled my head and neck. The cloud, growing lighter and thinner, was passing over us; the even sound of the rain changed into the

pattering of a few drops, falling from the awning and from the foliage. Again the frogs set up their piping, again the songs of the nightingales gushed forth, answering one another from the wet bushes, now in this direction, now in that. Everything grew light before us.

"How lovely!" he exclaimed, sitting down on the balustrade and smoothing my wet hair with his hand.

This simple caress had the effect on me of a reproof, and I felt like bursting into tears.

"And what more does a human being want?" he went on to say. "I am so content now! there is nothing that I lack, I am perfectly happy."

"That was not the way that you used to speak to me of your happiness," I said to myself. "However great it was, you used to say that still there was something that was lacking. But now you are calm and satisfied, while in my soul there seem to be inexpressible remorse and unwept tears."

"I like it too," said I, "but at the same time it makes me feel melancholy, for the very reason that everything is so beautiful around me. Everything in me is so incoherent, so shallow, so full of longing, and here it is so calm and beautiful. Can it be that for you no pain is mingled with the beauty of nature, as if there were a longing for something that was past?"

He drew away his hand from my head, and was silent for a little.

"Yes, I used to feel that way, especially in spring," said he, apparently collecting his thoughts. "And I sometimes used to sit up whole nights, wishing and hoping! such lovely nights they were! .... But then everything was in prospect, but now it is in retrospect; now I am satisfied with all that is, and that is excellent," he added, with such perfect nonchalance that, however painful it was to me to hear him say so, I was convinced that he was speaking the truth.

"And have you no longings?" I asked.

"Not for anything impossible," he replied, divining my thought.

"Here you are wetting your head," he added, caressing me as if I were a child, and again laying his hand on my hair. "You think because you see the shower wetting the leaves and the grass that you ought to be the grass and the leaves, and the shower too. But I take pleasure in them only as in everything else in the world that is beautiful, young, and happy."

"And have you no regrets for what has passed?" I went on to ask him, feeling that my heart was growing heavier and heavier.

He pondered a moment, and sat in silence. I saw that he was anxious to answer me with perfect sincerity.

"No," he replied laconically.

"'T is false! 't is false!" I exclaimed, drawing nearer to him, and looking him full in the face. "Have you no longing for what is past?"

"No," he maintained; "I am thankful for it, but I have no desire for it to return."

"But why would you not want it to return?" I asked.

He turned away, and began to look down into the park.

"I do not wish for it any more than for wings," said he. "It is an impossibility."

"And you would not like to live your life over, so as to live it better? You do not reproach yourself or me?"

"Certainly not! All has been for the best."

"Listen," said I, touching his arm so as to attract his attention. "Listen to me! Why have you never told me what you wished, so that I might have lived in exact accordance with your wishes? Why have you given me such perfect freedom, when I was unfit to make good use of it? Why did you cease to teach me? If you had only been willing, if you had only led me in any other way, then nothing, nothing of this sort would have been," said I, in a tone which expressed more and more energetically cold vexation and reproach, but not a trace of the old love.

"What would not have been?" he asked, in surprise, turning round to me. "Why, there is nothing wrong. It is all well, perfectly well," he added, with a smile.

"Can it be that he does not understand, or is it worse

still, that he does not care to understand?" I asked myself, and the tears stood in my eyes.

"Can it be that, if I had not been guilty in your eyes, you would have punished me so, by your indifference, by your scorn even?" I exclaimed suddenly. "Can it be that for no fault of mine you have suddenly taken from me all that I held dear?"

"What is the matter, my love?" he asked, evidently not understanding what I had said.

"No, let me speak. .... You have taken from me your trust, love, respect even; because I do not believe that you love me now, after what has passed. No, I must have a chance to speak to the end all that has been tormenting me this long time!" I exclaimed, without allowing him to interrupt me. "Was I to blame that I did not know life, and that you left me to acquire a knowledge of it alone?.... Am I to blame because, having learned all that was necessary, I have been struggling for a year to return to you? and yet you repulse me, as if you did not comprehend what I wanted, and all the time in such a way that it has been impossible to blame you and yet you have made me feel guilty and wretched. Yes, you would cast me back into a life which could make only your unhappiness and mine!"

"But when did I do such a thing?" he asked, with genuine dismay and amazement.

"Did you not say, last evening, and have you not constantly said, that I would not be content to live here, and that we must go back for the winter to Petersburg, which I detest so?" I continued. "Instead of helping me, you have avoided every frank explanation, every true affectionate talk with me. And then, if I should fall altogether, you would reproach me, and rejoice in my fall."

"Stop, stop!" he cried sternly and coldly; "what you have just said is not true. It only shows that you occupy a false position in regard to me, that you do not...."

"That I do not love. Speak it! speak it!" I said, taking the words out of his mouth, and bursting into

tears. I sat down on the bench and buried my face in my handkerchief.

"That is the way that he has misunderstood me!" I thought, trying to restrain the sobs that choked me. "It is all over, all over with our old love," said some voice in my heart.

He did not come to me or try to comfort me. He was offended at what I had said. His voice was calm and dry.

"I do not know what you have to reproach me for," he began; "if you mean that I do not love you as much as formerly, then...."

"Love!" said I, with my face buried in my handkerchief, which was more copiously wet with scalding tears.

"For this, time and we ourselves are to blame. Each period in life has its own love."....

He was silent.

"And shall I tell you all the truth, if, as you say, you desire frankness? When I first knew you, I spent sleepless nights thinking about you, and fashioned my own ideal of love; and this love grew and grew in my heart. Then, at Petersburg, and when we were abroad, I no longer spent terrible nights, and I tore this love to tatters, and demolished it, since it tormented me. I did not destroy it, but I only destroyed that part of it that tormented me; I calmed myself, and still I love you, but with a different kind of love."

"Yes, you call it love, but it is torture!" I exclaimed. "Why did you let me go into society if it seemed to you so harmful that on account of it you ceased to love me?"

"It was not society, my love."

"Why did you not exert your power?" I continued. "Why did you not bind me, kill me? It would have been better for me now than to be deprived of all that constitutes my happiness; it would have been well for me, and not shameful!"

And again I sobbed and hid my face.

At this moment Katya and Sonya came on the ter-

race, merry and dripping, and with loud voices and laughter; but when they saw us they became quiet, and immediately went into the house.

For a long time we did not speak, even after they had gone. I had had my cry, and felt relieved. I looked at him. He sat there with his head resting on his hand, and tried to make some reply to my glance; but he only sighed deeply, and still leaned on his elbow.

I went to him and took his hand. His glance rested thoughtfully on me.

"Yes," he continued, as if carrying out his thought, "to all of us, and especially you women, it is necessary to have personal experience of all the triviality of life in order to return to life itself; and it is impossible to believe any one else's report. You had at that time as yet had no experience of this brilliant and charming triviality which I admired in you. And I left you to have your own taste of it, and I felt that I had not the right to prevent you, although for me the time of this had gone by long before."

"Why, then, did you experience with me and let me experience this triviality, if you love me?" said I.

"Because, even if you had had the desire, still you would not have had the power of believing me; you yourself had to learn for yourself, and you have learned."

"You have reasoned much, very much," said I, "but your love was small."

Again we relapsed into silence.

"What you have just said is cruel, but it is true," he broke out suddenly, rising and beginning to walk up and down the terrace. "Yes, it is true. I have been to blame," he added, halting in front of me; "I should either not have permitted myself to love you at all, or to have loved more simply, yes."

"Let us forget it all," said I, timidly.

"No, what has passed will never return, thou wilt never return," and his voice grew tender as he said this.

"It has already returned," said I, laying my hand on his shoulder. He took my hand and pressed it.

"No, I did not tell you the truth when I said that I did not regret the past; yes, I regret it, I mourn over your vanished love, which is gone never to come back. Who is to blame for that? I know not. Love remains, but not the same; its place is occupied, but by a feeble love, lacking strength and vigor; recollections and thankfulness remain, but ...."

"Don't speak so," said I, interrupting. "Let all be again as it used to be. It can be, can it not?" I asked, looking into his eyes. But his eyes were bright and calm, and gazed at me without showing their depths.

Even while I said this, I felt that what I desired and asked him for was an impossibility. He smiled a serene, sweet, but, as it seemed to me, an old man's smile.

I stood silently near him, and my mind became calmer.

"Let us not try to repeat the experiment of life," said he. "Let us not deceive each other. There will be none of the old anxieties and agitations, and thank God for it! There is nothing for us to seek for, and nothing to trouble us. We have already made our experiments, and sufficient happiness has fallen to our lot. .... Now it is necessary for us to step aside and give room for some one to pass," said he, pointing to the nurse, who, with Vanya, came and stood at the terrace door. "And so it is, dear friend," he said in conclusion, drawing my head to his breast, and kissing me on my hair. It was not a lover, but an old friend, who kissed me.

And from the park arose stronger and sweeter the fragrant coolness of the night, the sounds and the silence grew more solemn, and the stars burned more brilliantly in the sky.

I looked at him and my soul grew suddenly calm; as it were, that moral, painful nerve which had been torturing me was relieved. And suddenly I understood clearly and serenely that the feeling of that time had passed irrevocably, like time itself, and now it would be not only impossible, but even be hard and grievous, for it to return. Yes, and, after all, was that

time, which had seemed to me so happy, was it really good? And it was already so long, long ago!....

"Now let us have tea," said he, and we went together into the drawing-room. At the door we were again met by the nurse, with Vanya. I took the child in my arms, covered up his bare, red legs, pressed him to my heart, and, scarcely touching him with my lips, kissed him. He, as in a troubled dream, waved his little hand, with its spreading, dimpled fingers, and opened his troubled eyes as if he were searching or trying to remember something. Suddenly those little eyes rested on me, the spark of intelligence shone out in them, his chubby pouting lips began to pucker and parted in a smile.

"Mine, mine, mine," I repeated to myself, with a happy sensation in all my being, and I pressed him to my heart, finding it hard to keep myself from hurting him. And I began to kiss his cold feet, his little belly, his hands, and his head where the hair was just beginning to grow. My husband came to me; I quickly covered the child's face, and then uncovered it again.

"Ivan Sergyeïvitch!" exclaimed my husband, tickling him under his little chin with his finger. But I again quickly covered Ivan Sergyeitch's face. No one but me had a right to look long at him! I glanced at my husband, his eyes rested on me with a bantering expression, and for the first time for many days it was easy and pleasant to look into them.

From that day forth my romance with my husband was ended; the old feeling became a precious, irrevocable memory; but the new feeling of love to my children and to the father of my children formed the beginning of another life, happy indeed, but in an entirely different way, and this I have continued to live up to the present moment.....

A PRISONER IN THE CAUCASUS

CHAPTER I

A RUSSIAN gentleman was serving as an officer in the army of the Caucasus. His name was Zhilin.

One day a letter from his home came to him. His old mother wrote him: —

I am now getting along in years, and I should like to see my beloved son before I die. Come and bid me farewell, lay me in the ground, and then with my blessing return again to your service. And I have been finding a bride for you, and she is intelligent and handsome and has property. If she pleases you, why then you can marry and settle down together.

Zhilin thought the matter over.

"It is very true: the old lady has been growing feeble; maybe I shall not have a chance to see her again. I'll go, and if the girl is pretty — then I might marry."

He went to his colonel, got his leave of absence, bade his comrades farewell, gave the soldiers of his command nine gallons [1] of vodka as a parting treat, and made his arrangements to leave.

There was war at that time in the Caucasus. The roads were not open for travel either by day or night. If any Russian rode or walked outside of the fortress, the Tartars were likely either to kill him or carry him off to the mountains. And it was arranged that twice a week an escort of soldiers should go from fortress to

[1] Four *vedros*, equivalent exactly to 8.80 gallons.

fortress. In front and behind marched the soldiers, and the travelers rode in the middle.

It was now summer-time. At sunrise the baggage train was made up behind the fortification; the guard of soldiery marched ahead, and the procession moved along the road.

Zhilin was on horseback, and his effects were on a cart which formed part of the train.

They had twenty-five versts[1] to travel. The train proceeded slowly; sometimes the soldiers halted; sometimes a wagon-wheel came off, or a horse balked, and all had to stop and wait.

The sun was already past the zenith, but the train had only gone halfway. It was dusty and hot, the sun was fierce, and there was no shelter. A bald steppe; not a tree or a shrub along the road.

Zhilin rode on ahead, occasionally stopping and waiting till the train caught up with him. He would listen, and hear the signal on the horn to halt again. And Zhilin thought, "Had I now better go on alone without the soldiers? I have a good horse under me; if I fall in with the Tartars, I can escape. Or shall I wait?"

He kept stopping and pondering. And just then another officer, also on horseback, rode up to him; his name was Kostuilin, and he had a musket.

He said:—

"Zhilin, let us ride on ahead together. I am so hungry that I cannot stand it any longer, and the heat too,—you could wring my shirt out!"

Kostuilin was a heavy, stout, ruddy man, and the sweat was dripping from him.

Zhilin reflected, and said:—

"And your musket is loaded?"

"It is."

"All right, let us go. Only one condition: not to separate."

And they started on up the road. They rode along the steppe, talking and looking on each side. There was a wide sweep of view in all directions. As soon as

[1] Sixteen and a half miles.

the steppe came to an end, the road went into a pass between two mountains.

And Zhilin said: —

"I must ride up on that mountain, and reconnoiter; otherwise you see they might come down from the mountain and surprise us."

But Kostuilin said: —

"What is there to reconnoiter? Let us go ahead."

Zhilin did not heed him.

"No," says he, "you wait for me here below. I 'll just glance around."

And he spurred his horse up the mountain to the left.

The horse that Zhilin rode was a hunter; he had bought her out of a drove of colts, paying a hundred rubles for her, and he had himself trained her. She bore him up the steep slope as if on wings. He had hardly reached the summit when before him, on a place a little less than three acres, mounted Tartars were standing. There were thirty of them.

He saw them, and started to turn back, but the Tartars had caught sight of him; they set out in pursuit of him, unstrapping their weapons as they galloped. Zhilin dashed down the precipice with all the speed of his horse, and cried to Kostuilin: —

"Fire your gun!" and to his horse he said, though not aloud: —

"Little mother, carry me safely, don't stumble; if you trip up, I am lost. If we get back to the gun, we won't fall into their hands."

But Kostuilin, as soon as he saw the Tartars, instead of waiting for him, galloped on with all his might toward the fortress. With his whip he belabored his horse, first on one side, then on the other; all that could be seen through the dust was the horse switching her tail.

Zhilin saw that his case was desperate. The gun was gone; nothing was to be done with a saber alone. He turned his horse back toward the train; he thought he might escape that way.

But in front of him he saw that six were galloping down the steep. His horse was good, but theirs were better; and besides, they had got the start of him. He attempted to wheel about, and was going to dash ahead again, but his horse had got momentum, and could not be held back; he flew straight down toward them.

He saw a red-bearded Tartar approaching him on a gray horse. He was gaining on him; he was gnashing his teeth; he was getting his gun ready.

"Well," thought Zhilin, "I know you devils; if you should take me prisoner, you would put me into a hole, and flog me with a whip. I won't give myself up alive."

Now, Zhilin was not of great size, but he was a uhlan. He drew his saber, spurred his horse straight at the red-bearded Tartar. He said to himself, "Either I will crush him with my horse, or I will hack him down with my saber."

Zhilin, however, did not reach the place on horseback; suddenly, from behind him, gunshots were fired at the horse. The horse fell headlong, and pinned Zhilin's leg to the ground.

He tried to arise; but already two ill-smelling Tartars were sitting on him, and pinioning his hands behind his back.

He burst from them, knocking the Tartars over; but three others had leaped from their horses, and began to beat him on the head with their gun-stocks.

His sight failed him, and he staggered.

The Tartars seized him, took from their saddles extra saddle-girths, bent his arms behind his back, fastened them with a Tartar knot, and lifted him up.

They took his saber from him, pulled off his boots, made a thorough search of him, relieved him of his money and his watch, and tore his clothes in pieces.

Zhilin glanced at his horse. The poor beast lay as she had fallen, on her side, and was kicking, vainly trying to rise. In her head was a hole, and from the hole the black blood was pouring; the dust for an arshin around was wet with it.

A Tartar went to the horse to remove the saddle. She was still kicking, so the man took out his dagger and cut her throat. The throat gave a whistling sound, a trembling ran over the body, and all was over.

The Tartars took off the saddle and the other trappings. The one with the red beard mounted his horse, and the others lifted Zhilin behind him; and, in order to keep him from falling, they fastened him with the reins to the Tartar's belt, and thus they carried him off to the mountains.

Zhilin sat behind, swaying, and bumping his face against the stinking Tartar's back.

All that he could see before him was the healthy Tartar back, and the sinewy neck, and a smooth-shaven nape, showing blue beneath the cap.

Zhilin's head ached; the blood trickled into his eyes. And it was impossible for him to get a more comfortable position on the horse, or wipe away the blood. His arms were so tightly bound that his collar-bones ached.

They rode along from mountain to mountain; they forded a river; then they entered a highway, and rode along a valley.

Zhilin tried to follow the route that they took him; but his eyes were glued together with blood, and it was impossible for him to turn round.

It began to grow dark; they crossed still another river, and began to climb a rocky mountain. There was an odor of smoke. The barking of dogs was heard.

They had reached an *aul.*[1]

The Tartars dismounted. The Tartar children came running up, and surrounded Zhilin, whistling and exulting. Finally they began to hurl stones at him.

The Tartar drove away the children, lifted Zhilin from the horse, and called a menial.

A Nogayets, with prominent cheek-bones, came at the call. He wore only a shirt. The shirt was torn; his whole breast was bare. The Tartar gave him some order. The menial brought a foot-stock. It consisted of two oaken blocks provided with iron rings, and in

[1] *Aul,* Tartar's village. — AUTHOR'S NOTE.

one of the rings was a clamp with a lock. They unfastened Zhilin's arms, put on the clog, and took him to a shed, pushed him in, and shut the door.

Zhilin fell on the manure. As he lay there, he felt round in the darkness, and when he had found a place that was less foul, he stretched himself out.

CHAPTER II

ZHILIN scarcely slept that night. The nights were short. He saw through a crack that it was growing light. Zhilin got up, widened the crack, and managed to look out.

Through the crack he could see a road leading down from the mountain; at the right, a Tartar saklia [1] with two trees near it. A black dog was lying on the road; a she-goat with her kids was walking by; they were shaking their tails.

He saw coming down the mountain a young Tartar girl in a variegated shirt, ungirdled, in pantalettes and boots; her head was covered with a kaftan, and on it she bore a great tin water-jug.

She walked along, swaying and bending her back, and holding by the hand a little shaven-headed Tartar urchin, who wore a single shirt.

After the Tartar maiden had gone into the saklia with her water-jug, the red-bearded Tartar of the evening before came out, wearing a silk beshmet, a silver dagger in his belt, and *bashmaks*, or sandals, on his bare feet. On the back of his head was a high cap of sheepskin, dyed black. He came out, stretched himself, stroked his red beard. He paused, gave some order to the menial, and went off somewhere.

Then two children on horseback came along on their way to the watering-trough. The snouts of the horses were wet.

Other shaven-headed youngsters, with nothing but shirts on, and nothing on their legs, formed a little

[1] A mountain hut in the Caucasus.

band, and came to the shed; they got a dry stick, and stuck it through the crack.

Zhilin growled "ukh" at them. The children began to squeal, and scatter in every direction as fast as their legs would carry them; only their bare knees glistened. But Zhilin began to be thirsty; his throat was parched. He said to himself: —

"I wonder if they won't come to look after me?"

While he was listening, the barn doors were thrown open.

The red Tartar came in, and with him another, of slighter stature and of dark complexion. His eyes were bright and black, his cheeks ruddy, his little beard well trimmed, his face jolly and always enlivened with a grin.

The dark man's clothing was still richer, — a beshmet of blue silk, embroidered with gold lace. In his belt, a great silver dagger; red morocco bashmaks, embroidered with silver, and over the fine bashmaks he wore a larger pair of stout ones. His cap was tall, of white lamb's-wool.

The red Tartar came in, muttered something, gave vent to some abusive language, and then stood leaning against the wall, fingering his dagger, and scowling under his brows at Zhilin, like a wolf.

But the dark Tartar, nervous and active, and always on the go, as if he were made of springs, came straight up to Zhilin, squatted down on his heels, showed his teeth, tapped him on the shoulder, began to gabble something in his own language, winked his eyes, and, clucking his tongue, kept saying: —

"A fine Russ, a fine Russ!"[1]

Zhilin did not understand him, and said: —

"Drink; give me some water."

The dark one grinned, and all the time he kept babbling: —

"A fine Russ!"

Zhilin signified by his hands and lips that they should give him water.

[1] *Korosho Urus, horosh Urus.*

The dark one understood, grinned, put his head out of the door, and cried: —

"Dina!"

A young girl came running in, — a slender, lean creature of thirteen, with a face like the dark man's. Evidently she was his daughter. She also had black, luminous eyes, and she was very pretty.

She was dressed in a long, blue shirt, with wide sleeves and without a belt. On the bottom, on the breast, and on the cuffs it was relieved with red trimmings. She wore on her legs pantalettes and bashmaks, and over the bashmaks another pair with high heels. On her neck was a necklace wholly composed of Russian half-ruble pieces. Her head was uncovered; she had her hair in a black braid, and on the braid was a ribbon, and to the ribbon were attached various ornaments and a silver ruble.

Her father gave her some command. She ran out, and quickly returned, bringing a little tin pitcher. After she had handed him the water, she also squatted on her heels in such a way that her knees were higher than her shoulders.

She sat that way, and opened her eyes, and stared at Zhilin while he was drinking, as if he were some wild beast.

Zhilin offered to return the pitcher to her. She darted away like a wild goat. Even her father laughed.

He sent her after something else. She took the pitcher, ran out, and brought back some unleavened bread on a small, round board, and again squatted down, and stared without taking her eyes from him.

The Tartars went out, and again bolted the door.

After a while the Nogayets also came to Zhilin, and said: —

"*Aï-da, khozyaïn, aï-da!*"

But he did not know Russian either. Zhilin, however, perceived that he wished him to go somewhere.

Zhilin hobbled out with his clog; it was impossible to walk, so he had to drag one leg. The Nogayets led the way for him.

He saw a Tartar village, a dozen houses, and the native mosque with its minaret.

In front of one house stood three horses saddled. Lads held them by their bridles. From this house came the dark Tartar, and beckoned with his hand, signifying that Zhilin was to come to him. He grinned, and kept saying something in his own tongue, and went into the house.

Zhilin followed him.

The room was decent; the walls were smoothly plastered with clay. Against the front wall were placed feather-beds; on the sides hung costly rugs; on the rugs were guns, pistols, and sabers, all silver-mounted.

On one side a little oven was set in, on a level with the floor.

The floor was of earth, clean as a threshing-floor, and the whole of the front part was covered with felt; rugs were distributed over the felt, and on the rugs were down pillows.

On the rugs were sitting some Tartars with bashmaks only on their feet — the dark Tartar, the red-bearded one, and three guests. Behind their backs, down cushions were placed; and before them on wooden plates were pancakes of millet flour, and melted butter in a cup, and the Tartar beer, called *buza*, in a pitcher. They ate with their fingers, and all dipped into the butter.

The dark man leaped up, bade Zhilin sit on one side, not on a rug but on the bare floor; going back again to his rug, he served his guests with cakes and buza.

The menial showed Zhilin his place; he himself took off his outside bashmaks, placed them by the door in a row with the bashmaks of the other guests, and took his seat on the felt as near as possible to his masters; and while they ate he looked at them, and his mouth watered.

After the Tartars had finished eating the pancakes, a Tartar woman entered, dressed in the same sort of shirt as the girl wore, and in pantalettes; her head was covered with a handkerchief. She carried out the butter

and the cakes, and brought a handsome finger-bowl, and a pitcher with a narrow nose.

The Tartars proceeded to wash their hands, then they folded their arms, knelt down, and puffed on all sides, and said their prayers. Then they talked together in their own tongue.

Finally one of the guests, a Tartar, approached Zhilin, and began to speak to him in Russian.

"Kazi Muhamet made you prisoner," said he, pointing to the red-bearded Tartar; "and he has given you to Abdul Murat," indicating the dark one. "Abdul Murat is now your master." [1]

Zhilin said nothing.

Abdul Murat began to talk, all the time pointing toward Zhilin, and grinned as he talked: —

"*Soldat Urus, korosho Urus.*"

The dragoman went on to say: —

"He commands you to write a letter home, and have them send money to ransom you. As soon as money is sent, he will set you free."

Zhilin pondered a little, and then said: —

"Does he wish a large ransom?"

The Tartars took counsel together, and then the dragoman said: —

"Three thousand silver rubles."

"No," replied Zhilin, "I can't pay that."

Abdul leaped up, began to gesticulate and talk to Zhilin; he seemed all the time to think that Zhilin understood him.

The dragoman translated his words.

"He means," says he, "how much will you give?"

Zhilin, after pondering a little, said: —

"Five hundred rubles."

Then the Tartars all began to talk at once. Abdul began to scream at the red-bearded Tartar. He grew so excited as he talked that the spittle flew from his mouth.

But the red-bearded Tartar only frowned, and clucked with his tongue

[1] *Khozyain.*

When all became silent again, the dragoman said: —

"Five hundred rubles is not enough to buy you of your master. He himself has paid two hundred for you. Kazi Muhamet was in debt to him. He took you for the debt. Three thousand rubles; it is no use to send less. But if you don't write, they will put you in a hole, and flog you with a whip."

"Ekh!" said Zhilin to himself, "the more cowardly one is, the worse it is for him."

He leaped to his feet, and said: —

"Now you tell him, dog that he is, that if he thinks he is going to frighten me, then I will not give him a single kopek nor will I write. I am not afraid of you, and you will never make me afraid of you, you dog!" The dragoman interpreted this to them, and again they all began to talk at once.

They gabbled a long time, then the dark one got up and came to Zhilin.

"*Urus*," says he, "*jigit, jigit Urus!*"

The word *jigit* in their language signifies a brave young man. And he grinned, said something to the dragoman, and the dragoman said: —

"Give a thousand rubles."

Zhilin would not give in: —

"I will not pay more than five hundred. But if you kill me, you will get nothing at all."

The Tartars consulted together, sent out the menial, and they themselves looked first at the door, then at Zhilin.

The menial returned, followed by a rather stout man in bare feet and almost stripped. His feet also were fastened to a clog.

Zhilin uttered an exclamation; he saw it was Kostuilin. So they had captured him too.

They placed him next his comrade; the two began to talk together, and the Tartars looked on and listened in silence.

Zhilin told how it had gone with him; Kostuilin told how his horse had stood stock-still, and his gun had missed fire, and that this same Abdul had overtaken him and captured him.

Abdul sprang to his feet, pointed to Kostuilin, and made some remark. The dragoman translated his words to mean that they now both belonged to the same master, and that the one who paid the ransom first would be freed first.

"Now," said he to Zhilin, "you lose your temper so easily, but your comrade is calm; he has written a letter home; they will send five thousand silver rubles. And so he will be well fed, and he won't be hurt."

And Zhilin said: —

"Let my comrade do as he pleases. Maybe he is rich. But I am not rich; I will do as I have already told you. Kill me if you wish, but it would not do you any good, and I will not pay you more than five hundred rubles."

They were silent.

Suddenly Abdul leaped up, brought a little chest, took out a pen, a sheet of paper, and ink, and pushed them into Zhilin's hands, then tapped him on the shoulder and said by signs: —

"Write."

He had agreed to take the five hundred rubles.

"Wait a moment," said Zhilin to the dragoman. "Tell him that he must feed us well, clothe us, and give us good decent foot-wear, and let us stay together so that it may be pleasanter for us. And lastly, that he take off these clogs."

He looked at his Tartar master, and smiled. The master also smiled, and when he learned what was wanted, said: —

"I will give you the very best clothes; a cherkeska[1] and boots, fit for a wedding. And I will feed you like princes. And if you want to live together, why, you can live in the shed. But it won't do to take away the clogs; you would run away. Only at night will I have them taken off." Then he jumped up and tapped him on the shoulder: "You good, me good."

Zhilin wrote his letter, but he put on it the wrong address so that it might never reach its destination. He said to himself: —

[1] A sort of long Circassian cloak.

"I shall run away."

They took Zhilin and Kostuilin to the shed, strewed corn-stalks, gave them water in a pitcher, and bread, two old cherkeski, and some worn-out military boots. It was evident that they had been stolen from some dead soldier. When night came they took off their clogs, and locked them up in the shed.

CHAPTER III

Thus Zhilin and his comrade lived a whole month. Their master was always on the grin.

"You, Ivan, good — me, Abdul, good."

But he gave them wretched food, — unleavened bread made of millet flour, cooked in the form of cakes, but often not heated through.

Kostuilin wrote home again, and was anxiously awaiting the arrival of the money, and lost his spirits. Whole days at a time he sat in the shed, and counted the days till his money should arrive, or else he slept.

But Zhilin knew that his letter would not reach its destination, and he did not write another.

"Where," he asked himself, — "where would my mother get so much money for my ransom? And besides, she lived for the most part on what I used to send her. If she made out to raise five hundred rubles, she would be in want till the end of her days. If God wills it, I may escape."

And all the time he kept his eyes open, and made plans to elude his captors.

He walked about the aul; he amused himself by whistling; or else he sat down and fashioned things, either modeling dolls out of clay or plaiting baskets of osiers, for Zhilin was a master at all sorts of handiwork.

One time he made a doll with nose and hands and feet, and dressed in a Tartar shirt, and he set the doll on the roof. The Tartar women were going for water. Dina, the master's daughter, caught sight of the doll.

She called the Tartar women. They set down their jugs, and looked and laughed.

Zhilin took the doll, and offered it to them. They kept laughing, but did not dare to take it.

He left the doll, went to the barn, and watched what would take place.

Dina ran up to the doll, looked around, seized the doll, and fled.

The next morning at dawn he saw Dina come out on the doorstep with the doll. And she had already dressed it up in pieces of red cloth, and was rocking it like a little child, and singing a lullaby in her own language.

The old woman came out, gave her a scolding, snatched the doll away, broke it in pieces, and sent off Dina to work.

Zhilin made another doll, a still better one, and gave it to Dina.

One time Dina brought a little jug, put it down, took a seat, and looked at him. Then she laughed, and pointed to the jug.

"What is she so gay about?" wondered Zhilin.

He took the jug, and began to drink. He supposed that it was water, but it was milk.

He drank up the milk.

"Good," says he.

How delighted Dina was! "Good, Ivan, good!"

And she jumped up, clapped her hands, snatched the jug, and ran away.

And from that time she began to bring him secretly fresh milk every day.

Now, sometimes the Tartars would make cheese-cakes out of goat's milk, and dry them on their roofs; so she used to carry some of these cakes secretly to him. And another time, when her father had killed a sheep, she brought him a piece of mutton in her sleeve. She threw it down, and ran away.

One time there was a heavy shower, and for a whole hour the rain poured as from buckets; and all the brooks grew roily. Wherever there had been a ford, the depth of the water increased to a fathom, and

boulders were rolled along by it. Everywhere torrents were rushing, the mountains were full of the roaring.

Now, when the shower was over, streams were pouring all through the village. Zhilin asked his master for a knife, whittled out a cylinder and some paddles, and made a water-wheel, and fastened manikins at the two ends.

The little girls brought him some rags, and he dressed up the manikins, one like a man, the other like a woman. He fastened them on, and put the wheel in a brook. The wheel revolved, and the dolls danced.

The whole village collected; the little boys and the little girls, the women, and even the Tartars, came and clucked with their tongues: —

"*Aï, Urus! aï, Ivan!*"

Abdul had a Russian watch, which had been broken. He took it, and showed it to Zhilin, and clucked with his tongue. Zhilin said: —

"Let me have it, I will mend it."

He took it, opened the penknife, took it apart. Then he put it together again, and gave it back. The watch ran.

The Tartar was delighted, brought him his old beshmet, which was all in rags, and gave it to him. Nothing else was to be done, — he took it, and used it as a covering at night.

From that time, Zhilin's fame went abroad, that he was a "master." Even from distant villages, they came to him. One brought him a gun-lock or a pistol to repair, another a watch.

His master furnished him with tools, — a pair of pincers and gimlets and a little file.

One time a Tartar fell ill; they came to Zhilin: "Come, cure him!"

Zhilin knew nothing of medicine. He went, looked at the sick man, said to himself, "Perhaps he will get well, anyway." He went into the shed, took water and sand, and shook them up together. He whispered a few words to the water in presence of the Tartars, and gave it to the sick man to drink.

Fortunately for him, the Tartar got well.

Zhilin had by this time learned something of their language. And some of the Tartars became accustomed to him; when they wanted him, they called him by name, "Ivan, Ivan;" but others always looked at him as if he was a wild beast.

The red-bearded Tartar did not like Zhilin; when he saw him, he scowled and turned away, or else insulted him.

There was another old man among them; he did not live in the aul, but came from down the mountain. Zhilin never saw him except when he came to the mosque to prayer. He was of small stature; on his cap he wore a white towel as an ornament. His beard and mustaches were trimmed; they were white as wool, and his face was wrinkled and brick-red. His nose was hooked like a hawk's, and his eyes were gray and cruel, and he had no teeth except two tusks.

He used to come in his turban, leaning on his staff, and glare like a wolf; whenever he saw Zhilin, he would snort, and turn his back.

One time Zhilin went down the mountain to see where the old man lived. He descended a narrow path, and saw a little stone-walled garden. On the other side of the wall were cherry trees, peach trees, and a little hut with a flat roof.

He went nearer; he saw beehives made of straw, and bees flying and humming around them. And the old man was on his knees busy doing something to one of the hives.

Zhilin raised himself up, so as to get a better view, and his clog made a noise.

The old man looked up, — squealed; he whipped his pistol from his belt, and fired at Zhilin, who had barely time to hide behind the wall.

The old man came to make his complaint to Zhilin's master. Abdul called him in, grinned, and asked him:

"Why did you go to the old man's?"

"I did n't do him any harm. I wanted to see how he lived."

Abdul explained it to the old man; but he was angry, hissed, mumbled something, showed his tusks, and threatened Zhilin with his hands.

Zhilin did not understand it all; but he made out that the old man wished Abdul to kill the two Russians, and not keep them in the aul.

The old man went off.

Zhilin began to ask his master: —

"Who is that old man?"

And the master replied: —

"He is a great man. He used to be our first jigit; he has killed many Russians. He used to be rich. He had three wives and eight sons. All lived in one village. The Russians came, destroyed his village, and killed seven of his sons. One son was left, and surrendered to the Russians. The old man went and gave himself up to the Russians also. He lived among them three months, found his son, killed him with his own hand, and escaped. Since that time he has stopped fighting. He went to Mecca to pray to God, and that 's why he wears a turban. Whoever has been to Mecca is called a hadji, and wears a chalma. But he does not love you Russians. He has bade me kill you, but I don't intend to kill you. I have paid out money for you, and besides, Ivan, I have come to like you. And so far from wishing to kill you, I would rather not let you go from me at all, if I had not given my word."

He laughed, and began to repeat in broken Russian: —

"*Tvoya Ivan, khorosh, moya, Abdul, khorosh* — Ivan, you good; Abdul, me good."

CHAPTER IV

Thus Zhilin lived a month. In the daytime he walked about the aul or did some handiwork, but when night came, and it grew quiet in the aul, he burrowed in his shed. It was hard work digging because of the stones, and he sometimes had to use his file on them; and thus

he dug a hole under the wall big enough to crawl through.

"Only," he thought, "I must know the region a little first, so as to escape in the right direction. And the Tartars would n't tell me anything."

He chose a time when his master was absent, then he went after dinner behind the aul to a mountain. His idea was to reconnoiter the country.

Now when Abdul went away he commanded his little son to follow Zhilin, and not take his eyes from him. The little fellow tagged after Zhilin, and kept crying: —

"Don't go there. Father won't allow it. I will call the men if you go!"

Zhilin began to reason with him.

"I am not going far," says he, "only to that hill; I want to find some herbs so as to cure your people. Come with me; I can't run away with this clog. If you will I will make you a bow and arrows to-morrow."

He persuaded the lad, they went together. To look at, the mountain was not far, but it was hard work with the clog; he went a little distance at a time, pulling himself up by main strength.

Zhilin sat down on the summit, and began to survey the ground.

To the south behind the shed lay a valley through which a herd was grazing, and another aul was in sight at the foot of it. Back of the village was another mountain still steeper, and back of that still another. Between the mountains lay a further stretch of forest, and then still other mountains rising ever higher and higher. And higher than all, stood snow-capped peaks white as sugar, and one snowy peak rose like a dome above them all.

To the east and west also were mountains. In every direction the smoke of auls was to be seen in the ravines.

"Well," he said to himself, "this is all their country."

He began to look in the direction of the Russian possessions. At his very feet was a little river, his aul

surrounded by gardens. By the river some women, no larger in appearance than little dolls, were standing and washing. Behind the aul was a lower mountain, and beyond it two other mountains covered with forests. And between the two mountains a plain stretched far, far away in the blue distance; and on the plain lay what seemed like smoke.

Zhilin tried to remember in what direction, when he lived at home in the fortress, the sun used to rise, and where it set. He looked.

"Just about there," says he, "in that valley, our fortress ought to be. There, between those two mountains, I must make my escape."

The little sun began to slope toward the west. The snowy mountains changed from white to purple; the wooded mountains grew dark; a mist arose from the valley; and the valley itself, where the Russian fortress must be, glowed in the sunset as if it were on fire. Zhilin strained his gaze. Something seemed to hang waving in the air, like smoke arising from chimneys.

And so it seemed to him that it must be from the fortress itself, — the Russian fortress.

It was already growing late. The voice of the mulla calling to prayer was heard. The herds began to return; the kine were lowing. The little lad kept repeating, "Let us go!" but Zhilin could not tear himself away.

They returned home.

"Well," thinks Zhilin, "now I know the place; I must make my escape."

He proposed to make his escape that very night. The nights were dark; it was the wane of the moon.

Unfortunately the Tartars returned in the evening. Usually they came in driving the cattle with them, and came in hilarious. But this time they had no cattle; but they brought a Tartar, dead, on his saddle. It was the red-headed Tartar's brother who had been killed. They rode in solemnly, and all collected for the burial.

Zhilin also went out to look.

They did not put the dead body in a coffin, but

wrapped it in linen, and placed it under a plane tree behind the village, where it lay on the sward.

The mulla came; the old men gathered together, their caps bound around with towels. They took off their shoes, and sat in rows on their heels before the dead.

In front was the mulla, behind him three old men in turbans, and behind them the rest of the Tartars. They sat there, with their heads bent low and kept silence. Long they kept silence. The mulla lifted his head and said: "Allah!" (That means God.) He said this one word, and again they hung their heads, and were silent a long time; they sat motionless.

Again the mulla lifted his head, saying, "Allah!" and all repeated it after him:—

"Allah!"

Then silence again.

The dead man lay on the sward; he was motionless, and they sat as if they were dead. Not one made a motion. The only sound was the rustling of the foliage of the plane tree, stirred by the breeze.

Then the mulla offered a prayer. All got to their feet; they took the dead body in their arms, and carried it away.

They brought it to a pit. The pit was not a mere hole, but was hollowed out under the earth like a cellar.

They took the body under the armpits and by the legs, doubled it up, and let it down gently, shoved it forcibly under the ground, and laid the arms along the belly. The Nogayets brought a green osier. They laid it in the pit; then they quickly filled it up with earth, and over the dead man's head they placed a gravestone. They smoothed the earth over, and again sat around the grave in rows. There was a long silence.

"Allah! Allah! Allah!"

They sighed and got up.

The red-bearded Tartar gave money to the old men, then he got up, struck his forehead three times with a whip, and went home.

The next morning Zhilin saw the red-haired Tartar leading a mare through the village, and three Tartars following him. They went behind the village. Kazi Muhamet took off his beshmet, rolled up his sleeves, — his hands were powerful, — took out his dagger, and sharpened it on a whetstone. The Tartars held back the mare's head. Kazi Muhamet approached, and cut the throat; then, he turned the animal over, and began to flay it, pulling away the hide with his mighty fists.

The women and maidens came, and began to wash the intestines and the viscera. Then they cut up the mare, and carried the meat to the hut. And the whole village collected at the Kazi Muhamet's to celebrate the dead.

For three days they feasted on the mare and drank buza, and they celebrated the dead. All the Tartars were at home.

On the fourth day about noon, Zhilin saw that they were collecting for some expedition. Their horses were brought out. They put on their gear, and started off, ten men of them, under the command of the red-headed Tartar; only Abdul stayed at home. There was a new moon, but the nights were still dark.

"Now," said Zhilin to himself, "we must escape to-day." And he told Kostuilin.

But Kostuilin was afraid. "How can we escape? We don't know the way."

"I know the way."

"But we should not get there during the night."

"Well, if we don't get there we will spend the night in the woods. I have some cakes. What are you going to do? It will be all right if they send you the money, but you see, your friends may not collect so much. And the Tartars are angry now because the Russians have killed one of their men. They say they are thinking of killing us."

Kostuilin thought and thought. "All right, let us go!"

CHAPTER V

ZHILIN crept down into his hole, and widened it so that Kostuilin also could get through, and then they sat and waited till all should be quiet in the aul.

As soon as the people were quiet in the aul, Zhilin crept under the wall, and came out on the other side. He whispered to Kostuilin: —

"Crawl under."

Kostuilin also crept under, but in doing so he hit a stone with his leg, and it made a noise.

Now, the master had a brindled dog as a watch, — a most ferocious animal; they called him Ulyashin.

Zhilin had been in the habit of feeding him. Ulyashin heard the noise, and began to bark and jump about, and the other dogs joined in.

Zhilin gave a little whistle, threw him a piece of cake. Ulyashin recognized him, began to wag his tail, and ceased barking.

Abdul had heard the disturbance, and cried from within the saklia: —

"Hait! hait! Ulyashin."

But Zhilin scratched the dog behind the ears. The dog made no more sound, rubbed against his legs, and wagged his tail.

They waited behind the corner.

All became silent again; the only sound was the bleating of a sheep in the fold, and far below them the water roaring over the boulders.

It was dark, but the sky was studded with stars. Over the mountain the young moon hung red, with its horns turned upward.

In the valleys a mist was rising, white as milk. Zhilin started up, and said to his comrade, "Well, brother, *aï-da!*"

They set out again.

But as they got under way, they heard the call of the mulla on the minaret: —

"*Allah! Bis'm Allah! el Rakhman!*"

"That means, the people will be going to the mosque."

Again they sat down and hid under the wall.

They sat there long, waiting until the people should pass. Again it grew still.

"Now God be with us!"[1]

They crossed themselves, and started.

They went across the dvor, and down the steep bank to the stream, crossed the stream, and proceeded along the valley. The mist was thick, and closed in all around them, but above their heads the stars could still be seen.

Zhilin used the stars to guide him which way to go. It was cool in the mist, it was easy walking, only their boots were troublesome, — they were worn at the heels. Zhilin took his off, threw them away, and walked barefoot. He sprang from stone to stone, and kept glancing at the stars.

Kostuilin began to grow weary.

"Go slower," said he; "my boots chafe me, my whole foot is raw."

"Then take them off, it will be easier."

Kostuilin began to go barefoot, but that was still worse; he kept scraping his feet on the stones and having to stop.

Zhilin said to him: —

"You may cut your feet, but you will save your life; but if you are caught they will kill you, which would be worse."

Kostuilin said nothing, but crept along, groaning. For a long time they went down the valley. Suddenly they heard dogs barking at the right. Zhilin halted, looked around, climbed up the bank, and felt about with his hands.

"Ekh!" said he, "we have made a mistake; we have gone too far to the right. Here is a strange aul. I could see it from the hill. We must go back to the left, up the mountain. There must be a forest there."

But Kostuilin objected: —

[1] *Nu, S Bogom!* — literally, "with God."

"Just wait a little while, let us get breath. My feet are all blood."

"Eh, brother! they will get well. You should walk more lightly. This way."

And Zhilin turned back toward the left, and uphill toward the forest.

Kostuilin kept halting and groaning. Zhilin tried to hush him up, and still hastened on.

They climbed the mountain. And there they found the forest. They entered it; their clothes were all torn to pieces on the thorns. They found a little path through the woods. They walked along it.

"Halt!"

There was the sound of hoofs on the path. They stopped to listen. It sounded like the tramping of a horse: then it also stopped. They set out once more; again the tramping hoofs. When they stopped, it stopped.

Zhilin crept ahead, and investigated a light spot on the path.

Something was standing there. Whether it was a horse or not, on it there was something strange, not at all like a man.

It snorted — plainly!

"What a strange thing!"

Zhilin gave a slight whistle. There was a dash of feet from the path into the forest, a crackling in the underbrush, and something rushed along like a hurricane, with a crashing of dry boughs.

Kostuilin almost fell to the ground in fright. But Zhilin laughed, and said: —

"That was a stag. Do you hear how it crashes through the woods with its horns? We were afraid of him, and he is afraid of us."

They went on their way. Already the Great Bear was beginning to set; the dawn was not distant. And they were in doubt whether they should come out right or not. Zhilin was inclined to think that they were on the right track, and that it would be about ten versts farther before they reached the Russian fortress, but

there was no certain guide; you could not tell in the night.

They came to a little clearing. Kostuilin sat down and said:—

"Do as you please, but I will not go any farther; my legs won't carry me."

Zhilin tried to persuade him.

"No," said he, "I won't go, I can't go."

Zhilin grew angry; he threatened him, he scolded him.

"Then I will go on without you. Good-by!"

Kostuilin jumped up and followed. They went four versts farther. The fog began to grow thicker in the forest. Nothing could be seen before them; the stars were barely visible.

Suddenly they heard the tramping of a horse just in front of them; they could hear his shoes striking on the stones.

Zhilin threw himself down on his belly, and tried to listen by laying his ear to the ground.

"Yes, it is,—it is some one on horseback coming in our direction."

They slipped off to one side of the road, crouched down in the bushes, and waited. Zhilin crept close to the path, and looked.

He saw a mounted Tartar riding along, driving a cow, and muttering to himself. When the Tartar had ridden by, Zhilin returned to Kostuilin.

"Well, God has saved us. Up with you! Come along!"

Kostuilin tried to rise, and fell back.

"I can't; by God, I can't. My strength is all gone."

The man was staggered, and was bloated, and the sweat poured from him; and as they were caught in the forest in the midst of the cold fog, and his feet were torn, he lost all courage. Zhilin tried to lift him by main force. Then Kostuilin cried:—

"*Aï!* it hurts."

Zhilin was frightened to death.

"What are you screaming for? Don't you know that

Tartar is near? He will hear you." But he said to himself, "Now, if he is really played out, what can I do with him? I can't abandon a comrade. Now," says he, "get up; climb on my back. I will carry you if you can't walk any longer." He took Kostuilin on his shoulders, holding him by the thighs, and went along the path with his burden. "Only," says he, "don't put your hands on my throat, for Christ's sake! Hold on by my shoulders."

It was hard for Zhilin. His feet were also bloody, and he was weary. He stopped, and made it a little easier for himself by setting Kostuilin down, and getting him higher up on his shoulders. Then he went on again.

Evidently the Tartar had heard Kostuilin scream. Zhilin caught the sound of some one following them, and shouting in his language. Zhilin hid among the bushes. The Tartar aimed his gun; he fired it off but missed; began to whine in his native tongue, and galloped up the path.

"Well," said Zhilin, "we are lost, brother. The dog .... he will be right back with a band of Tartars on our track. .... If we don't succeed in putting three versts between us, we are lost." And he thinks to himself, "The devil take it, that I had to bring this clod along with me! Alone, I should have got there long ago."

Kostuilin said: —

"Go alone. Why should you be lost on my account?"

"No, I will not go; it would not do to abandon a comrade."

He lifted him again on his shoulders, and started on. Thus he made a verst. It was forest all the way, and no sign of outlet. But the fog was now beginning to lift, and seemed to be floating away in little clouds; not a star was any longer to be seen. Zhilin was tired out.

A little spring gushed out by the road; it was walled in with stones. There he stopped, and dropped Kostuilin.

"Let me rest a little," said he, "and get a drink. We will eat our cakes. It can't be very far now."

He had just stretched himself out to drink, when the sound of hoofs was heard behind them. Again they hid in the bushes at the right under the crest, and crouched down.

They heard Tartar voices. The Tartars stopped at the very spot where they had turned in from the road. After discussing awhile, they seemed to be setting dogs on the scent.

The refugees heard the sound of a crashing through the bushes; a strange dog came directly to them. He stopped and barked.

The Tartars followed on their track. They also were strangers.

They seized them, bound them, lifted them on horses, and carried them off.

After they had ridden three versts, Abdul, their master, with two Tartars, met them. He said something to their new captors. They were transferred to Abdul's horses, and were brought back to the aul.

Abdul was no longer grinning, and he said not a word to them.

They reached the village at daybreak; the prisoners were left in the street. The children gathered around them, tormenting them with stones and whips, and howling.

The Tartars gathered around them in a circle, and the old man from the mountain was among them. They began to discuss. Zhilin made out that they were deciding on what should be done with them. Some said that they ought to be sent farther into the mountains, but the old man declared that they must be killed. Abdul argued against it.

"I have paid out money for them," said he. "I shall get a ransom for them."

But the old man said: —

"They won't pay anything; they will only be an injury to us. And it is a sin to feed Russians. Kill them, and that is the end of it."

They separated. Abdul came to Zhilin, and reported the decision.

"If," says he, "the ransom is not sent in two weeks, I will flog you. And if you try to run away again, I will kill you like a dog. Write your letter, and write it good!"

Paper was brought them; they wrote their letters. Clogs were put on their feet again; they were taken behind the mosque. There was a pit twelve feet[1] deep, and they were thrust down into this pit.

CHAPTER VI

LIFE was made utterly wretched for them. Their clogs were not taken off even at night, and they were not let out at all.

Unbaked dough was thrown down to them as if they were dogs, and water was let down in a jug. In the pit it was damp and suffocating.

Kostuilin became ill, and swelled up, and had rheumatism all over his body, and he groaned or slept all the time.

Even Zhilin lost his spirits; he saw that they were in desperate straits. And he did not know how to get out of it.

He had begun to make an excavation, but there was nowhere to hide the earth; Abdul discovered it, and threatened to kill him.

He was squatting down one time in the pit, and thinking about liberty, and he grew sad.

Suddenly a cake[2] fell directly into his lap, then another, and some cherries followed.

He looked up, and there was Dina. She peered down at him, laughed, and then ran away. And Zhilin began to conjecture, "Could n't Dina help me?"

He cleared out a little place in the pit, picked up some clay, and made some dolls. He made men and women, horses and dogs; he said to himself: —

"When Dina comes, I will toss them up to her."

But Dina did not make her appearance on the next

[1] Five *arshins*, 11.65 feet. [2] *Lepyoshka.*

day. And Zhilin heard the trampling of horses' hoofs; men came riding up; the Tartars collected at the mosque, arguing, shouting, and talking about the Russians.

And he also heard the voice of the old man. Zhilin could not understand very well, but he gathered that the Russians were somewhere near, and the Tartars were afraid that they would attack the aul, and they did not know what to do with the prisoners.

They talked awhile, and went away.

Suddenly Zhilin heard a rustling at the edge of the pit.

He saw Dina squatting on her heels, with her knees higher than her head; she leaned over, her necklace hung down, and swung over the pit. And her little eyes twinkled like stars. She took from her sleeve two cheese-cakes, and threw them down to him. Zhilin accepted them, and said: —

"Why did you stay away so long? I have been making you some dolls. Here they are."

He began to toss them up to her, one at a time.

But she shook her head, and would not look at them. "I can't take them," said she. She was silent for a while, but sat there; then she said, "Ivan, they want to kill you."

She made a significant motion across her throat.

"Who wants to kill me?"

"Father. The old men have ordered him to. But I am sorry for you."

And Zhilin said: —

"Well, then, if you are sorry for me, bring me a long pole."

She shook her head, meaning that it was impossible.

He clasped his hands in supplication to her.

"Dina, please! Bring one to me, Dinushka!"

"I can't," said she. "They would see me; they are all at home."

And she ran away.

Afterward, Zhilin was sitting there in the evening, and wondering what was going to happen. He kept looking

up. He could see the stars, but the moon had not yet risen. The mulla uttered his call, then all became silent.

Zhilin began already to doze, thinking to himself, "The little maid is afraid."

Suddenly a piece of clay fell on his head; he glanced up; a long pole was sliding over the edge of the pit, it slid out, began to descend toward him, it reached the bottom of the pit. Zhilin was delighted. He seized it, pulled it along, — it was a strong pole. He had noticed it before on his master's roof.

He gazed up; the stars were shining high in the heavens, and Dina's eyes, at the edge of the pit, gleamed in the darkness like a cat's.

She craned her head over, and whispered, "Ivan, Ivan." And she waved her hands before her face, meaning, "Softly, please."

"What is it?" said Zhilin.

"All have gone, there are only two at home."

And Zhilin said: —

"Well, Kostuilin, let us go, let us make our last attempt. I will help you."

Kostuilin, however, would not hear to it.

"No," says he, "it is not meant for me to get away from here. How could I go when I haven't even strength to turn over?"

"All right, then. Good-by.[1] Don't think me unkind."

He kissed Kostuilin.

He clasped the pole, told Dina to hold it firmly, and tried to climb up. Twice he fell back, — his clog so impeded him. Kostuilin pushed him from below; he managed to get to the top; Dina pulled on the sleeves of his shirt with all her might, laughing heartily.

Zhilin pulled up the pole, and said: —

"Carry it back to its place, Dina, for if they found it they would flog you."

She dragged off the pole, and Zhilin began to go down the mountain. When he had reached the bottom of the cliff he took a sharp stone and tried to break the

[1] *Prashchaï.*

padlock of his clog. But the lock was strong; he could not strike it fairly.

He heard some one hurrying down the hill, with light, skipping steps. He said to himself:—

"That is probably Dina again."

Dina ran to him, took a stone, and said:—

"*Daï ya.* — Let me try it."

She knelt down, and began to work with all her might. But her hands were as delicate as osiers. She had no strength. She threw down the stone, and burst into tears.

Zhilin again tried to break the lock, and Dina squatted by his side, and leaned against his shoulder. Zhilin glanced up, and saw at the left behind the mountain a red glow like a fire; it was the moon just rising.

"Well," he said to himself, "I must cross the valley and get into the woods before the moon rises." He stood up and threw away the stone. He would have to go as he was, even with the clog.

"Good-by," says he. "Dinushka, I shall always remember you."

Dina clung to him; searched with her hands for a place to stow away some cakes. He took the cakes.

"Thank you," said he; "you are a thoughtful darling. Who will make you dolls after I am gone?" and he stroked her hair.

Dina burst into tears, hid her face in her hands, and scrambled up the hillside like a kid. He could hear, in the darkness, the jingling of the coins on her braids.

Zhilin crossed himself, picked up the lock of his clog so that it might not make a noise, and started on his way, dragging his leg all the time, and keeping his eyes all the time on the glow where the moon was rising.

He knew the way. He had eight versts to go in a direct course, but he would have to strike into the forest before the moon became entirely visible. He crossed the stream, and now the light was increasing behind the mountain.

He proceeded down the valley; and as he walked along, he kept glancing around; still the moon was

not visible. The glow was now changing to white light, and one side of the valley grew brighter and brighter. The shadow kept creeping nearer and nearer to the mountain, till it reached its very foot.

Zhilin still hurried along, all the time keeping in the shadow.

He hurried as fast as he could, but the moon rose still faster; and now, at the right, the mountain tops began to be illuminated.

He struck into the forest just as the moon rose above the mountains. It became as light and white as day. On the trees all the leaves were visible. It was warm and bright on the mountain side; everything seemed as if it were dead. The only sound was the roaring of a torrent far below. He walked along in the forest and met no one. Zhilin found a little spot in the forest where it was still darker, and sat down to rest.

While he rested he ate one of his cakes. He procured a stone and once more tried to break the padlock, but he only bruised his hands, and failed to break the lock.

He arose and went on his way. When he had gone a verst his strength gave out, his sore feet tortured him. He had to walk ten steps at a time and then stop.

"There 's nothing to be done for it," says he to himself. "I will push on as long as my strength holds out; for if I sit down, then I shall not get up again. If I do not reach the fortress before it is daylight, then I will lie down in the woods and spend the day, and start on to-morrow night again."

He walked all night. Once he passed two Tartars on horseback, but he heard them at some distance, and hid behind a tree.

Already the moon was beginning to pale, the dew had fallen, it was near dawn, and Zhilin had not reached the end of the forest.

"Well," said he to himself, "I will go thirty steps farther, strike into the forest, and sit down."

He went thirty steps, and saw the end of the forest. He went to the edge; it was broad daylight. Before him, as on the palm of his hand, were the steppe and

the fortress; and on the left, not far away on the mountain side, fires were burning, or dying out; the smoke rose, and men were moving around the watch-fires.

He looked, and saw the gleaming of firearms; Cossacks, soldiers!

Zhilin was overjoyed.

He gathered his remaining strength, and walked down the mountain. And he said to himself:—

"God help me, if a mounted Tartar should get sight of me on this bare field! I should not escape him, even though I am so near."

Even while these thoughts were passing through his mind, he saw at the left, on a hillock not fourteen hundred feet away, three Tartars on the watch. They caught sight of him — bore down upon him. Then his heart failed within him. Waving his arms, he shouted at the top of his voice:—

"Brothers! help, brothers!"

Our men heard him — mounted Cossacks dashed out toward him. They spurred their horses so as to outstrip the Tartars.

The Cossacks were far off, the Tartars near. And now Zhilin collected his last remaining energies, seized his clog in his hand, ran toward the Cossacks, and, without any consciousness of feeling, crossed himself and cried, "Brothers, brothers, brothers!"[1]

The Cossacks were fifteen in number.

The Tartars were dismayed. Before they reached him, they stopped short. And Zhilin was running toward the Cossacks.

The Cossacks surrounded him, and questioned him: "Who are you?" "What is your name?" "Where did you come from?"

But Zhilin was almost beside himself; he wept, and kept shouting, "Brothers, brothers!"

The soldiers hastened up, and gathered around him; one brought him bread, another kasha-gruel, another vodka, another threw a cloak around him, still another broke off his clog.

[1] *Bratsui, bratsui, bratsui!*

The officers recognized him, they brought him into the fortress. The soldiers were delighted, his comrades pressed into Zhilin's room.

Zhilin told them what had happened to him, and he ended his tale with the words:—

"That's the way I went home and got married! No, I see such is not to be my fate."

And he remained in the service in the Caucasus.

At the end of a month Kostuilin was ransomed for five thousand rubles.

He was brought home scarcely alive.

THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYITCH

AND OTHER STORIES

INTRODUCTION

THE stories here presented are interesting not only in themselves, but also by reason of the variety in style and subject characterizing them. The "Death of Ivan Ilyitch" is a somber and powerful picture of the insidious progress of a fatal disease as well as a study in religious philosophy. No one can read Count Tolstoï's writings without being struck by the insistent emphasis put on the fact of death. It threatens and hangs over all men, of course; if there is any one thing which is taken for granted, it is that we all must die. But the average man is fortunately as oblivious of this inevitable approach as he is of the action of his vital organs. But with Count Tolstoï the dread of death seems to have been a mighty reality, and he has paused again and again to paint in the most agonizing detail the fatal divorce of life. In his war pictures this is to be expected; but we have death-bed scenes such as that of the old Count Bezukhoï, that of Prince Andreï, that of Nikolaï Levin, and this painful and morbid study of Ivan Ilyitch's lonely and pathetic passage through the Valley of the Shadow. Then in contrast with this comes the story entitled "Three Deaths," where the same tragedy is enacted by a woman of rank, by a rude peasant, and — with a touch of genius — by a tree. Several chapters of Count Tolstoï's treatise on "Life" are devoted to an analysis of the fear of death, and it is evident that he has to a large extent conquered, by his later philosophy, the passionate dread which he confesses hung like a pall over his life.

The short stories which follow were written as tracts for the people, and were in many cases, when published in their separate form, illustrated with quaint woodcuts.

They represent the latest phase in the author's views — an evolution which it is easy to trace from Olyenin in "The Cossacks," through Pierre Bezukhoï in "War and Peace," and Levin in "Anna Karenina," up to the idealized muzhik who earns his bread in the sweat of his brow, does good for evil, makes no resistance to violence, and comes out victorious over every temptation of the grotesque and comical devil and his imps. This form of composition was very likely suggested to Count Tolstoï by the popular tales that have been in vogue in Russia for three or four hundred years.

Such, for example, is the fifteenth-century "Story of Vasarga the Merchant," in which the child Mudro-muisl, or Wise Thought, solves the riddles of the wicked Tsar Nesmian. This *grim* but dull-minded tyrant treats Dmitri Vasarga hospitably; but when the guest, in reply to his question, "What is thy religion?" doughtily replies, "I am of the Christian religion, of the city of Kief, the little merchant Dmitri; and I believe in one God, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," he is given one of these choices: to adopt the false religion of the grim tsar, and have great honor; to solve three riddles, or, if he fail to solve the riddles, and still stand firm, to go to prison and starve to death. Mudro-muisl saves his father's wealth and health. He puts the tyrant to shame, is *elected to the throne by a vote of the people*, who were Christian at heart in spite of their tsar, and, having released from the noisome dungeon the three hundred and thirty starving merchants who had been true to their faith, he establishes free trade, and becomes a prosperous and admirable prince, — a most suggestive and inspiring story for any nation which had lurking desires for democracy. Its moral is simply this: that the ruler of a country, even though he be fortified on the throne with wealth and power, is, nevertheless, at the mercy of a little child who has the wit to control and utilize the sentiment of the whole people.

The story of Vasarga is four centuries old, and Russia has not even a constitution. Will Count Tolstoï's theories of non-resistance and communism, of the bless-

ings of poverty and service, be in practice four hundred years hence?

These stories will be regarded both seriously and as curiosities, for it is impossible not to read between the lines. The only wonder is that the censor who forbade "My Religion" should have allowed the skazka entitled "Ivan the Fool." The implication of criticism on the whole military system of Russia is not even covert. The question of regicide is plainly discussed in "A Candle." Though regicide itself is condemned, it is not dubious who is meant by the "overseer" of the story. Count Tolstoï's whole system of philosophy is concretely revealed in these allegories; it is not necessary here to discuss the strength or weakness of his logic. But there are few who will not be touched by the moral which Count Tolstoï conveys by means of these quaint and curious tales. And there can be no doubt that such a story as "Where Love is there God is also" is a masterpiece of exquisite beauty, certain to achieve immortality.

The style of the original Russian is staccato, abrupt, even crabbed. Connective conjunctions are frequently omitted, and there seems to be a deliberate mixture of tenses, past and present. No attempt has been made to reproduce these peculiarities in English; though the simplicity, which is one of the charms of the folk-tale and of these, is legitimately preserved.

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THE DEATH OF IVAN ILYITCH

(1884-1886)

CHAPTER I

IN the great building of the law-courts, while the proceedings in the Mielvinsky suit were at a standstill, the members of the board and the prokuror met in Ivan Yegorovitch Shebek's private room, and the conversation turned on the famous Krasovsky suit. Feodor Vasilyevitch talked himself into a passion in pointing out the men's innocence; Ivan Yegorovitch maintained his side; but Piotr Ivanovitch, who had not entered into the discussion at first, took no part in it even now, and was glancing over the *Vyedomosti*, which had just been handed to him.

"Gentlemen!" said he, "Ivan Ilyitch is dead!"

"Is it possible?"

"Here! read for yourself," said he to Feodor Vasilyevitch, handing him the paper, which had still retained its odor of freshness.

Heavy black lines inclosed these printed words: —

"*Praskovia Feodorovna Golovina, with heartfelt sorrow, announces to relatives and friends the death of her beloved husband, Ivan Ilyitch Golovin, member of the Court of Appeal,*[1] *who departed this life on the 16th February, 1882. The funeral will take place on Friday, at one o'clock in the afternoon.*"

Ivan Ilyitch had been the colleague of the gentlemen there assembled, and all liked him. He had been ill

[1] *Sudyebnaya Palata.*

for several weeks, and it was said that his case was incurable. His place was kept vacant for him; but it had been decided that, in case of his death, Alekseyef might be assigned to his place, while either Vinnikof or Schtabel would take Alekseyef's place. And so, on hearing of Ivan Ilyitch's death, the first thought of each of the gentlemen gathered in that room was in regard to the changes and promotions which this death might bring about among the members of the council and their acquaintances.

"Now, surely, I shall get either Schtabel's or Vinnikof's place," was Feodor Vasilyevitch's thought. "It has been promised me for a long time; and this promotion will mean an increase in my salary of eight hundred rubles, besides allowances."

"I must propose right away to have my brother-in-law transferred from Kaluga," thought Piotr Ivanovitch. "My wife will be very glad. Then it will be impossible for her to say that I have never done anything for her relations."

"I have been thinking that he would n't get up again," said Piotr Ivanovitch aloud. "It is too bad."

"But what was really the matter with him?"

"The doctors could not determine. That is to say, they determined it, but each in his own way. When I saw him the last time, it seemed to me that he was getting better."

"But I have n't been to see him since the Christmas holidays. I kept meaning to go."

"Did he have any property?"

"His wife had a very little, I think. But a mere pittance."

"Well, we must go to see her. They live a frightful distance off."

"That is, from you. Everything is far from you!"

"Now, see here! He can't forgive me because I live on the other side of the river," said Piotr Ivanovitch to Shebek, with a smile.

And then they talked about the long distances in cities, till the recess was over.

Over and above the considerations caused by the death of this man, in regard to the mutations and possible changes in the court that might result from it, the very fact of the death of an intimate friend aroused as usual in all who heard about it a feeling of pleasure that "it was he, and not I, who was dead."

Each one said to himself, or felt:—

"Well, he is dead, and I am not."

The intimate acquaintances, the so-called friends, of Ivan Ilyitch could not help having these thoughts, and also felt that now it was incumbent on them to fulfil the very melancholy obligation of propriety, in going to the funeral and paying a visit of condolence to the widow.

Feodor Vasilyevitch and Piotr Ivanovitch had been more intimate with him than the others.

Piotr Ivanovitch had been his fellow in the law-school, and had felt under obligations to Ivan Ilyitch.

Having, at dinner-time, informed his wife of Ivan Ilyitch's death, and his reflections as to the possibility of his brother-in-law's transfer into their circle, Piotr Ivanovitch, not stopping to rest, put on his dress-coat, and drove off to Ivan Ilyitch's.

At the door of Ivan Ilyitch's residence stood a carriage and two izvoshchiks. At the foot of the stairs, in the hallway by the hat-rack, pushed back against the wall, was the brocaded coffin-cover, with tassels and lace full of purified powdered camphor. Two ladies in black were taking off their shubkas. One whom he knew was Ivan Ilyitch's sister; the other lady he did not know. Piotr Ivanovitch's colleague, Schwartz, was just coming down-stairs; and, as he recognized the newcomer, he stopped on the upper step, and winked at him as much as to say:—

"Ivan Ilyitch was a bad manager; you and I understand a thing or two."

Schwartz's face, with its English side-whiskers, and his spare figure under his dress-coat, had, as always, an elegant solemnity; and this solemnity, which was forever contradicted by Schwartz's jovial nature, here had a peculiar piquancy, so Piotr Ivanovitch thought.

Piotr Ivanovitch gave precedence to the ladies, and slowly followed them up-stairs. Schwartz did not make any move to descend, but waited at the landing. Piotr Ivanovitch understood his motive; without doubt, he wanted to make an appointment for playing cards that evening. The ladies mounted the stairs to the widow's room; and Schwartz, with lips gravely compressed and firm, and with mischievous eyes, indicated to Piotr Ivanovitch, by the motion of his brows, the room at the right, where the dead man was.

Piotr Ivanovitch entered, having that feeling of uncertainty, ever present under such circumstances, as to what would be the proper thing to do. But he knew that in such circumstances the sign of the cross never came amiss. As to whether he ought to make a salutation or not, he was not quite sure; and he therefore took a middle course. As he went into the room, he began to cross himself, and, at the same time, he made an almost imperceptible inclination. As far as he was permitted by the motion of his hands and head, he took in the appearance of the room. Two young men, apparently nephews, — one, a scholar at the gymnasium, — were just leaving the room, making the sign of the cross. An old woman was standing motionless; and a lady, with strangely arched eyebrows, was saying something to her in a whisper. A hearty-looking, energetic sacristan[1] in a frock was reading something in a loud voice, with an expression which forbade all objection. The muzhik, Gerasim, who acted as butler, was sprinkling something on the floor, passing slowly in front of Piotr Ivanovitch As he saw this, Piotr Ivanovitch immediately became cognizant of a slight odor of decomposition.

Piotr Ivanovitch, at his last call on Ivan Ilyitch, had seen this muzhik in the library. He was performing the duties of nurse, and Ivan Ilyitch was extremely fond of him.

Piotr Ivanovitch kept crossing himself, and bowing impartially toward the corpse, the sacristan, and the ikons that stood on a table in the corner. Then, when

[1] *Diachok.*

it seemed to him that he had already continued too long making signs of the cross with his hand, he stopped short, and began to gaze at the dead man.

The dead man lay in the drapery of the coffin, as dead men always lie, a perfectly lifeless weight, absolutely unconscious, with stiffened limbs, with head forever at rest on the pillow; and showing, as all corpses show, a brow like yellow wax, with spots on the sunken temples, and a nose so prominent as almost to press down on the upper lip.

He had greatly changed, and was far more emaciated than when Piotr Ivanovitch had last seen him; but, as in the case of all the dead, his face was more beautiful, especially more dignified, than it had been when he was alive. On his face was an expression signifying that what was necessary to do, that had been done, and had been done in due form. Besides this, there was in his expression a reproach or warning to the living. This warning seemed ill-judged to Piotr Ivanovitch, or at least was not applicable to him. There was something displeasing in it; and therefore Piotr Ivanovitch again crossed himself hastily, and, it seemed to him, too hastily for proper decorum, turned around and went to the door.

Schwartz was waiting for him in the next room, standing with legs wide apart, and with both hands behind his back twirling his "cylinder" hat. Piotr Ivanovitch was cheered by the first glance at Schwartz's jovial, tidy, elegant figure. Piotr Ivanovitch comprehended that Schwartz was superior to these things, and did not give way to these harassing impressions. His appearance alone said: —

The incident of Ivan Ilyitch's funeral cannot serve as a sufficient reason for breaking into the order of exercises of the session; that is to say, nothing shall hinder us this very evening from opening and shuffling a pack of cards while the servant is putting down four fresh candles; in general, there is no occasion to presuppose that this incident can prevent us from having a good time this evening, as well as any other.

He even said this in a whisper to Piotr Ivanovitch as he joined him, and proposed that they meet for a game at Feodor Vasilyevitch's. But evidently it was not Piotr Ivanovitch's fate to play cards that evening.

Praskovia Feodorovna, a short woman, and stout in spite of all her efforts to the contrary, — for her figure grew constantly wider and wider from her shoulders down, — dressed all in black, with lace on her head, and with the same extraordinarily arched eyebrows as the lady who had been standing by the coffin, came out from her rooms with other ladies; and as she preceded them through the door of the death-chamber, she said: —

"Mass will take place immediately. Please come in."

Schwartz, making a slight, indefinite bow, stood still, evidently undecided whether to accept or to decline this invitation. Praskovia Feodorovna, as soon as she recognized Piotr Ivanovitch, sighed, came quite close to him, took him by the hand, and said: —

"I know that you were a true friend of Ivan Ilyitch's." And she fixed her eyes on him, awaiting his action to respond to her words.

Piotr Ivanovitch knew that, just as in the other case it had been incumbent upon him to make the sign of the cross, so here he must press her hand, sigh, and say, "Why, certainly." And so he did. And having done so, he realized that the desired result was obtained, — that he was touched, and she was touched.

"Come," said the widow; "before it begins, I must have a talk with you. Give me your arm."

Piotr Ivanovitch offered her his arm; and they walked along to the inner rooms, passing by Schwartz, who winked compassionately at Piotr Ivanovitch.

His jovial glance said: —

"It 's all up with your game of *vint;* but don't be concerned, we 'll find another partner. We 'll cut in when you have finished."

Piotr Ivanovitch sighed still more deeply and grievously, and Praskovia Feodorovna pressed his arm gratefully.

When they entered her drawing-room, which had hangings of rose-colored cretonne, and was dimly lighted by a lamp, they sat down near a table, — she on a divan, but Piotr Ivanovitch on a low ottoman,[1] the springs of which were out of order, and yielded unevenly under his weight.

Praskovia Feodorovna wanted to suggest to him to take another chair; but to make such a suggestion seemed out of place in her situation, and she gave it up. As he sat down on the ottoman, Piotr Ivanovitch remembered how, when Ivan Ilyitch was decorating that drawing-room, he had asked his opinion about this very same rose-colored cretonne, with its green leaves.

As the widow passed by the table in going to the divan, — the whole room was crowded with ornaments and furniture, — she caught the black lace of her black mantilla on the woodwork. Piotr Ivanovitch got up, in order to detach it; and the ottoman, freed from his weight, began to shake and jostle him. The widow herself was busy disengaging her lace; and Piotr Ivanovitch sat down again, flattening out the ottoman which had rebelled under him. But still the widow could not get free, and Piotr Ivanovitch again arose; and again the ottoman rebelled, and even creaked.

When all this was arranged, she took out a clean cambric handkerchief, and began to weep. The episode with the lace and the struggle with the ottoman had thrown a chill over Piotr Ivanovitch, and he sat with a frown. This awkward situation was interrupted by Sokolof, Ivan Ilyitch's butler, with the announcement that the lot in the graveyard, which Praskovia Feodorovna had selected, would cost two hundred rubles. She ceased to weep, and, with the air of a martyr, looked at Piotr Ivanovitch, saying in French that it was very trying for her. Piotr Ivanovitch made a silent gesture, signifying his undoubted belief that this was inevitable.

"Smoke, I beg of you!" she said with a voice expressive of magnanimity as well as melancholy. And she discussed with Sokolof the price of the lot.

[1] *Puff.*

As Piotr Ivanovitch began to smoke, he overheard how she very circumstantially inquired into the various prices of land, and finally determined on the one which it suited her to purchase. When she had settled upon the lot, she also gave her orders in regard to the singers. Sokolof withdrew.

"I attend to everything myself," she said to Piotr Ivanovitch, moving to one side the albums that lay on the table; and then, noticing that the ashes were about to fall on the table, she hastened to hand Piotr Ivanovitch an ash-tray, and continued: —

"It would be hypocritical for me to declare that grief prevents me from attending to practical affairs. On the contrary, though it cannot console me, yet it may divert my mind from my troubles."

Again she took out her handkerchief, as if preparing to weep; and suddenly, apparently making an effort over herself, she shook herself, and began to speak calmly: —

"At all events, I have some business with you."

Piotr Ivanovitch bowed, not giving the springs of the ottoman a chance to rise up against him, since only the moment before they had been misbehaving under him.

"During the last days, his sufferings were terrible."

"He suffered very much?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch.

"Oh! terribly! For hours before he died he did not cease to shriek. For three days and nights he shrieked all the time. It was unendurable. I cannot understand how I stood it. You could hear him through three doors! Akh! how I suffered!"

"And was he in his senses?" asked Piotr Ivanovitch.

"Yes," she said in a whisper, "to the last moment. He bade us farewell a quarter of an hour before he died, and even asked us to send Volodya out."

The thought of the sufferings of a man whom he had known so intimately, first as a jolly child and schoolboy, and then in adult life as his colleague, suddenly filled Piotr Ivanovitch with terror in spite of the unpleasant sense of this woman's hypocrisy and his own. Once

more he saw that forehead, that nose nipping on the lip, and he felt frightened for himself.

"Three days and nights of horrible sufferings and death! Perhaps this may happen to me also, immediately, at any moment," he said to himself. And for an instant he felt panic-stricken. But immediately, though he himself knew not how, there came to his aid the common idea that this had happened to Ivan Ilyitch, and not to him, and therefore such a thing had no business to happen to him, and could not be possible; that, in thinking so, he had fallen into a melancholy frame of mind, which was a foolish thing to do, as was evident by Schwartz's face.

In the course of these reflections, Piotr Ivanovitch became calm, and began with interest to ask for the details of Ivan Ilyitch's decease, as if death were some accident peculiar to Ivan Ilyitch alone, and absolutely remote from himself.

After speaking at greater or less length of the details of the truly terrible physical sufferings endured by Ivan Ilyitch, — Piotr Ivanovitch listened to these details simply because Praskovia Feodorovna's nerves had been affected by her husband's sufferings, — the widow evidently felt that it was time to come to the point.

"Oh! Piotr Ivanovitch! how painful! how horribly painful! how horribly painful!" and again the tears began to flow.

Piotr Ivanovitch sighed, and waited till she had blown her nose. When she had blown her nose, he said: —

"Believe me...."

And again the springs of her speech were unloosed, and she explained what was apparently her chief object in seeing him: this matter concerned the problem of how she should make her husband's death secure her funds from the treasury.

She pretended to ask Piotr Ivanovitch's advice about a pension; but he clearly saw that she had already mastered the minutest points, even those that he himself knew not, in the process of extracting from the treasury the greatest possible amount in case of death.

But what she wanted to find out, was whether it were not possible to become the recipient of still more money.

Piotr Ivanovitch endeavored to devise some means to this effect; but, having pondered a little, and out of politeness condemned our government for its niggardliness, he said that it seemed to him impossible to obtain more. Then she sighed, and evidently began to devise some means of getting rid of her visitor. He understood, put out his cigarette, arose, pressed her hand, and passed into the anteroom.

In the dinning-room, where stood the clock that Ivan Ilyitch had taken such delight in, when he purchased it at a bric-à-brac shop, Piotr Ivanovitch met the priest and a few more acquaintances who had come to the funeral; and he recognized Ivan Ilyitch's daughter, a pretty young lady, whom he knew. She was all in black. Her very slender figure seemed more slender than usual. She looked melancholy, determined, almost irritated. She bowed to Piotr Ivanovitch as if he were in some way to blame. Behind the daughter, with the same melancholy look, stood a rich young man, a magistrate[1] of Piotr Ivanovitch's acquaintance, who, as he heard, was her betrothed. He bowed to them disconsolately, and was about to pass into the death-chamber, when he saw coming up the stairs the slender form of Ivan Ilyitch's son, — a gymnasium student, and a striking image of Ivan Ilyitch. It was the same little Ivan Ilyitch whom Piotr Ivanovitch remembered at the law-school. His eyes were wet with tears, and had the faded appearance common to unhealthy boys of thirteen or fourteen. The boy, as soon as he saw Piotr Ivanovitch, scowled rudely and bashfully. Piotr Ivanovitch nodded at him, and entered the death-chamber.

The mass had begun; there were candles, groans, incense, tears, and sobs. Piotr Ivanovitch stood looking gloomily down at his feet. He did not once glance at the corpse, and to the end did not yield to the softening influences; and he was one of the first to leave.

[1] *Sudyebnui slyedovatyel.*

There was no one in the anteroom. Gerasim, the butler,[1] rushed from the dead man's late room, tossed about all the fur garments with his strong hands, in order to find Piotr Ivanovitch's shuba, and handed it to him.

"Well, brother Gerasim," said Piotr Ivanovitch, so as to say something, "it 's too bad, is n't it?"

"God's will. We shall all be there," said Gerasim, showing his close, white, peasant's teeth; and, like a man earnestly engaged in some great work, he opened the door with alacrity, called the coachman, helped Piotr Ivanovitch into the carriage, and then hastened back up the front steps, as if he were eager to find something else to do.

It was particularly agreeable to Piotr Ivanovitch to breathe the fresh air, after the odor of the incense, of the dead body, and carbolic acid.

"Where shall I drive to?" asked the coachman.

"It 's not too late. I 'll go to Feodor Vasilyevitch's. after all."

And Piotr Ivanovitch drove off. And, in fact, he found them just finishing the first rubber, so that it was convenient for him to cut in.

CHAPTER II

The past history of Ivan Ilyitch's life was most simple and uneventful, and yet most terrible.

Ivan Ilyitch died at the age of forty-five, a member of the Court of Justice. He was the son of a functionary who had followed, in various ministries and departments at Petersburg, a career such as brings men into a position from which, on account of their long service and their rank, they are never turned adrift, even though it is plainly manifest that their actual usefulness is at an end; and consequently they obtain imaginary, fictitious places, and from six to ten thousand that are not fictitious, on which they live till a good old age.

[1] *Bufetnui muzhik.*

Such had been Ilya Yefimovitch Golovin, privy councilor, a useless member of various useless commissions.

He had three sons; Ivan Ilyitch was the second. The eldest had followed the same career as his father's, but in a different ministry, and was already nearing that period of his service in which inertia carries a man into emoluments. The third son had been a failure. He had completely gone to pieces in several positions, and he was now connected with railways; and his father and his brothers and especially their wives not only disliked to meet him, but, except when it was absolutely necessary, even forgot that he existed.

A sister was married to Baron Gref, who, like his father-in-law, was a Petersburg chinovnik. Ivan Ilyitch had been *le phénix de la famille*, as they used to say. He was neither so chilling and formal as the eldest brother, nor so unpromising as the youngest. He was the mean between them, — an intelligent, lively, agreeable, and polished man. He had studied at the law-school with his younger brother, who did not graduate but was expelled from the fifth class; Ivan Ilyitch, however, finished his course creditably. At the law-school he showed the same characteristics by which he was afterward distinguished all his life: he was capable, good-natured even to gayety, and sociable, but strictly fulfilling all that he considered to be his duty; duty, in his opinion, was all that is considered to be such by men in the highest station. He was not one to curry favor, either as a boy, or afterward in manhood; but from his earliest years he had been attracted by men in the highest station in society, just as a fly is by the light;[1] he adopted their ways, their views of life, and entered into relations of friendship with them. All the passions of childhood and youth had passed away, not leaving serious traces. He had yielded to sensuality and vanity, and, toward the last of his life, to the higher forms of liberalism, but all within certain limits which his nature faithfully prescribed for him.

While at the law-school, he had done some things

[1] In Russian, the word for *light* and *society* is the same.

which hitherto had seemed to him very shameful, and which while he was engaged in them aroused in him deep scorn for himself. But afterward, finding that these things were also done by men of high position, and were not considered by them disgraceful, he came to regard them, not indeed as worthy, but as something to put entirely out of his mind, and he was not in the least troubled by the recollection of them.

When Ivan Ilyitch had graduated from the law-school with the tenth rank,[1] and received from his father some money for his uniform, he ordered a suit of Scharmer, added to his trinkets the little medal with the legend *respice finem*, bade the prince and principal farewell, ate a dinner with his classmates at Donon's, and, furnished with new and stylish trunk, linen, uniform, razors, and toilet articles, and a plaid, ordered or bought at the very best shops, he departed for the province, as chinovnik and private secretary to the governor — a place which his father procured for him.

In the province, Ivan Ilyitch at once got himself into the same sort of easy and agreeable position as his position in the law-school had been. He attended to his duties, pressed forward in his career, and at the same time enjoyed life in a cheerful and circumspect manner. From time to time, delegated by his chief, he visited the districts, bore himself with dignity toward both his superiors and subordinates, and, without overweening conceit, fulfilled with punctuality and incorruptible integrity the duties imposed upon him, preëminently in the affair of the dissenters.[2]

Notwithstanding his youth, and his tendency to be gay and easy-going, he was, in matters of State, thor-

[1] That is, as *Kollyezhski Sekretar*, corresponding to *Shtaps-Kapitan* in the army; the next rank in the *chin* would be titular councilor, — *Titulyarnui Sovyetnik*, — which confers personal nobility.

[2] The first body of *raskolniks*, or dissenters, called the "Old Believers," arose in the time of the Patriarch Nikon, who, in 1654, revised the Scriptures. A quarrel as to the number of fingers to be used in giving the blessing, and the manner of spelling Jesus, seems to have been the chief cause of the *raskol*, or schism. The Greek Church has now to contend with a host of different forms of dissent. — ED.

oughly discreet, and carried his official reserve even to sternness. But in society he was often merry and witty, and always good-natured, polite, and *bon enfant*, as he was called by his chief and his chief's wife, at whose house he was intimate.

While he was in the province, he had maintained relations with one of those ladies who are ready to fling themselves into the arms of an elegant young lawyer. There was also a dressmaker; and there were occasional sprees with visiting flügel-adjutants, and visits to some out-of-the-way street after supper; he had also the favor of his chief and even of his chief's wife, but everything of this sort was attended with such a high tone of good-breeding that it could not be qualified by hard names; it all squared with the rubric of the French expression, *Il faut que jeunesse se passe.*[1]

All was done with clean hands, with clean linen, with French words, and, above all, in company with the very highest society, and therefore with the approbation of those high in rank.

In this way Ivan Ilyitch served five years, and a change was instituted in the service. The new tribunals were established; new men were needed.

And Ivan Ilyitch was chosen as one of the new men.

He was offered the position of examining magistrate;[2] and accepted it, notwithstanding the fact that this place was in another government, and that he would be obliged to give up the connections he had formed, and form new ones.

Ivan Ilyitch's friends saw him off. They were photographed in a group, they presented him a silver cigarette-case, and he departed for his new post.

As an examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch was just as *comme il faut*, just as circumspect, and careful to sunder the obligations of his office from his private life, and as successful in winning universal consideration, as when

[1] "A man must sow his wild oats."

[2] *Sudyebnui Slyedovatyel*; see Anatole Leroy Beaulieu's "L'Empire des Tsars," vol. ii.

he was a chinovnik with special functions. The office of magistrate itself was vastly more interesting and attractive to Ivan Ilyitch than his former position had been.

To be sure, it used to be agreeable to him, in his former position, to pass with free and easy gait, in his Scharmer-made uniform, in front of trembling petitioners and petty officials, waiting for an interview, and envying him, as he went without hesitation into his chief's private room, and sat down with him to drink a cup of tea, and smoke a cigarette; but the men who had been directly dependent on his pleasure were few, — merely police captains and dissenters,[1] if he were sent out with special instructions. And he liked to meet these men, dependent on him, not only politely, but even on terms of comradeship; he liked to make them feel that he, who had the power to crush them, treated them simply, and like friends. Such men at that time were few.

But now, as examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch felt that all, all without exception, even men of importance, of distinction, all were in his hands, and that all he had to do was to write such and such words on a piece of paper with a heading, and this important, distinguished man would be brought to him in the capacity of accused or witness, and, unless he wished to ask him to sit down, he would have to stand in his presence, and submit to his questions. Ivan Ilyitch never took undue advantage of this power; on the contrary, he tried to temper the expression of it. But the consciousness of this power, and the possibility of tempering it, furnished for him the chief interest and attractiveness of his new office.

In the office itself, especially in investigations, Ivan Ilyitch was very quick to master the process of eliminating all circumstances extraneous to the case, and of disentangling the most complicated details in such a manner that the case would be presented on paper only in its essentials, and absolutely shorn of his own personal opinion, and, last and not least, that every necessary formality would be fulfilled. This was a new mode of

[1] *Ispravniks* and *raskolniks*.

doing things. And he was one of the first to be engaged in putting into operation the code of 1864.

When he took up his residence in the new city, as examining magistrate, Ivan Ilyitch made new acquaintances and ties; he put himself on a new footing, and adopted a somewhat different tone. He held himself rather aloof from the provincial authorities, and took up with a better circle among the judges and wealthy nobles living in the city; and he adopted a tone of easy-going criticism of the government, together with a moderate form of liberalism and "civilized citizenship." At the same time, though Ivan Ilyitch in no wise diminished the elegance of his toilet, yet he ceased to shave his chin, and allowed his beard to grow as it would.

Ivan Ilyitch's life in the new city also passed very agreeably. The society which *fronded* against the government was good and friendly; his salary was larger than before; and, while he had no less zest in life, he had the additional pleasure of playing whist, a game in which, as he enjoyed playing cards, he quickly learned to excel, so that he was always on the winning side.

After two years of service in the new city Ivan Ilyitch met the lady who became his wife. Praskovia Feodorovna Mikhel was the most fascinating, witty, brilliant young girl in the circle where Ivan Ilyitch moved. In the multitude of other recreations, and as a solace from the labors of his office, Ivan Ilyitch established sportive, easy-going relations with Praskovia Feodorovna.

At the time when Ivan Ilyitch was a chinovnik with special functions, he had been a passionate lover of dancing; but now that he was examining magistrate, he danced only as an occasional exception. He now danced with the idea that, "though I am an advocate of the new order of things, and belong to the fifth class, still, as far as the question of dancing goes, I can at least show that in this respect I am better than the rest."

Thus, it frequently happened that, toward the end of a party, he danced with Praskovia Feodorovna; and it

was principally at the time of these dances, that he made the conquest of Praskovia Feodorovna. She fell in love with him. Ivan Ilyitch had no clearly decided intention of getting married; but when the girl fell in love with him, he asked himself this question: "In fact, why should I not get married?" said he to himself.

The young lady, Praskovia Feodorovna, came of a good family belonging to the nobility,[1] far from ill-favored, had a small fortune. Ivan Ilyitch might have aspired to a more brilliant match, but this was an excellent one. Ivan Ilyitch had his salary; she, he hoped, would have as much more. She was of good family; she was sweet, pretty, and a thoroughly well-bred woman. To say that Ivan Ilyitch got married because he was in love with his betrothed, and found in her sympathy with his views of life, would be just as incorrect as to say that he got married because the men of his set approved of the match.

Ivan Ilyitch took a wife for two reasons: he gave himself a pleasure in taking such a wife; and, at the same time, the people of the highest rank considered such an act proper.

And so Ivan Ilyitch got married.

The wedding ceremony itself, and the first few days of their married life with its connubial caresses, their new furniture, their new plate, their new linen, everything, even the prospects of an increasing family, were all that could be desired. So that Ivan Ilyitch began to think that marriage not only was not going to disturb his easy-going, pleasant, gay, and always respectable life, so approved by society, and which Ivan Ilyitch considered a perfectly natural characteristic of life in general, but was also going to add to it. But from the first months of his wife's pregnancy, there appeared something new, unexpected, disagreeable, hard, and trying, which he could not have foreseen, and from which it was impossible to escape.

His wife, without any motive, as it seemed to Ivan

[1] *Dvorianstvo.*

Ilyitch, *de gaité de cœur*, as he said to himself, began to interfere with the pleasant and decent current of his life; without any cause she grew jealous of him, demanded attentions from him, found fault with everything, and caused him disagreeable and stormy scenes.

At first Ivan Ilyitch hoped to free himself from this unpleasant state of things by the same easy-going and respectable acceptation of life which had helped him in days gone by. He tried to ignore his wife's disposition, and continued to live as before in an easy and pleasant way. He invited his friends, he gave card-parties, he attempted to make his visits to the club or to friends; but his wife began one time to abuse him with rough and energetic language, and continued persistently to scold him each time that he failed to fulfil her demands, having evidently made up her mind not to cease berating him until he was completely subjected to her authority, — in other words, until he would stay at home, and be just as deeply in the dumps as she herself, — a thing which Ivan Ilyitch dreaded above all.

He learned that married life, at least as far as his wife was concerned, did not always add to the pleasantness and decency of existence, but, on the contrary, disturbed it, and that, therefore, it was necessary to protect himself from such interference. And Ivan Ilyitch tried to devise means to this end. His official duties were the only thing that had an imposing effect upon Praskovia Feodorovna; and Ivan Ilyitch, by means of his office, and the duties arising from it, began the struggle with his wife, for the defense of his independent life.

When the child was born, and in consequence of the various attempts and failures to have it properly nursed, and the illnesses, real and imaginary, of both mother and child, wherein Ivan Ilyitch's sympathy was demanded, but which were absolutely foreign to him, the necessity for him to secure a life outside of his family became still more imperative.

According as his wife grew more irritable and exacting, so Ivan Ilyitch transferred the center of his life's burdens more and more into his office. He began to

love his office more and more, and became more ambitious than he had ever been.

Very soon, not longer than a year after his marriage, Ivan Ilyitch came to the conclusion that married life, while affording certain advantages, was in reality a very complicated and burdensome thing, in relation to which, if one would fulfil his duty, that is, live respectably and with the approbation of society, one must work out a certain system, just as in public office.

And such a system Ivan Ilyitch secured in his matrimonial life. He demanded of family life only such conveniences in the way of home dinners, a housekeeper, a bed, as it could furnish him, and, above all, that respectability in external forms which was in accordance with the opinions of society. As for the rest, he was anxious for pleasant amenities; and if he found them, he was very grateful. On the other hand, if he met with opposition and complaint, then he immediately took refuge in the far-off world of his official duties, which alone offered him delight.

Ivan Ilyitch was regarded as an excellent magistrate, and at the end of three years he was appointed deputy-prokuror. His new functions, their importance, the power vested in him of arresting and imprisoning any one, the publicity of his speeches, his success obtained in this field, — all this still more attached him to the service.

Children came; his wife kept growing more irritable and ill-tempered; but the relations which Ivan Ilyitch maintained toward family life made him almost proof against her temper.

After seven years of service in one city, Ivan Ilyitch was promoted to the office of prokuror in another government. They moved; they had not much money, and the place where they went did not suit his wife. Although his salary was larger than before, yet living was more expensive; moreover, two of their children died; and thus family life became still more distasteful to Ivan Ilyitch.

Praskovia Feodorovna blamed her husband for all

the misfortunes that came on them in their new place of abode. Most of the subjects of conversation between husband and wife, especially the education of their children, led to questions which were productive of quarrels, so that quarrels were always ready to break out. Only at rare intervals came those periods of affection which distinguish married life, but they were not of long duration. These were little islands in which they rested for a time; but then again they pushed out into the sea of secret animosity, which expressed itself by driving them farther and farther apart.

This alienation might have irritated Ivan Ilyitch, if he had not considered that it was inevitable; but he now began to look on this situation not merely as normal, but even as the goal of his activity in the family. This goal consisted in withdrawing as far as possible from these unpleasantnesses, or of giving them a character of innocence and respectability; and he attained this end by spending less and less time with his family; but when he was to do so, then he endeavored to guarantee his position by the presence of strangers.

But Ivan Ilyitch's chief resource was his office. In the world of his duties was concentrated all his interest in life. And this interest wholly absorbed him. The consciousness of his power of ruining any one whom he might wish to ruin; the importance of his position manifested outwardly when he came into court or met his subordinates; his success with superiors and subordinates; and, above all, his skill in the conduct of affairs, — and he was perfectly conscious of it, — all this delighted him, and, together with conversations with his colleagues, dinners and whist, filled all his life. Thus, for the most part, Ivan Ilyitch's life continued to flow in its even tenor as he considered that it ought to flow, — pleasantly and respectably.

Thus he lived seven years longer. His eldest daughter was already sixteen years old; still another little child had died; and there remained a lad, the one who was in school, the object of their wrangling. Ivan Ilyitch wanted to send him to the law-school; but Pra-

skovia, out of spite toward him, selected the gymnasium. The daughter studied at home, and made good progress; the lad also was not at all backward in his studies.

CHAPTER III

Thus seventeen years of Ivan Ilyitch's life passed since the time of his marriage. He was already an old prokuror, having declined several transfers in the hope of a still more desirable place, when there occurred unexpectedly an unpleasant turn of affairs which was quite disturbing to his peaceful life.

Ivan Ilyitch had been hoping for the position of president[1] in a university city; but Hoppe got in ahead of him, and obtained the place. Ivan Ilyitch became irritated, began to make recriminations, got into a quarrel with him and his next superior; signs of coolness were manifested toward him, and in the subsequent appointments he was passed over.

This was in 1880. This year was the most trying of Ivan Ilyitch's life. It happened, on the one hand, that his salary did not suffice for his expenses; on the other, that he was forgotten by all, and that what seemed to him a great, an atrocious, injustice toward himself was regarded by others as a perfectly natural thing. Even his father did not think it his duty to come to his aid. He felt that he was abandoned by all his friends, who considered that his position, worth thirty-five hundred rubles a year, was very normal and even fortunate. He alone knew that with the consciousness of the injustice which had been done him, and with his wife's everlasting rasping, and with the debts which began to accumulate, now that he lived beyond his means — he alone knew that his situation was far from normal.

The summer of that year, in order to lighten his expenses, he took leave of absence, and went with his wife to spend the summer at the country place belonging to Praskovia Feodorovna's brother.

[1] *Predsyedatyel.*

In the country, relieved of his official duties, Ivan Ilyitch for the first time felt not only irksomeness, but insupportable anguish; and he made up his mind that it was impossible to live in such a way, and that he must take immediate and decisive steps, no matter what they were.

After a long, sleepless night, which he spent walking up and down the terrace, Ivan Ilyitch decided to go to Petersburg, to bestir himself and to get transferred into another ministry so as to punish *them* who had not known how to appreciate him.

On the next day, notwithstanding all the protests of his wife and brother-in-law, he started for Petersburg.

He wanted only one thing, — to obtain a place worth five thousand a year. He would not stipulate for any special ministry, any special direction, any form of activity. All that he needed was a place, — a place with a salary of five thousand, in the administration, in the banks, on the railways, in the institutions of the Empress Maria, even in the customs service; but the sole condition was the five thousand salary, the sole condition to be relieved from the ministry where they did not know how to appreciate him.

And lo! this trip of Ivan Ilyitch's met with astonishing, unexpected success. At Kursk an acquaintance of his, F. S. Ilyin, came into the first-class carriage, and informed him of a telegram just received by the governor of Kursk to the effect that a change was about to be made in the ministry: in Piotr Ivanovitch's place would be appointed Ivan Semyonovitch.

This probable change, over and above its significance for Russia, had a special significance for Ivan Ilyitch, from the fact that by bringing up a new official, Piotr Petrovitch, and probably his friend Zakhar Ivanovitch, it was in the highest degree favorable for Ivan Ilyitch. Zakhar Ivanovitch was a colleague and friend of Ivan Ilyitch.

In Moscow the tidings were confirmed. And when he reached Petersburg, Ivan Ilyitch sought out Zakhar

Ivanovitch, and obtained the promise of a sure position in his old ministry, — that of justice.

At the end of a week he telegraphed his wife : —

"*Zakhar, in Miller's place ; in the first report shall be appointed.*"

Ivan Ilyitch, thanks to this change of administration, suddenly obtained in his old ministry such an appointment as put him two grades above his colleagues, — five thousand salary, and thirty-five hundred for traveling expenses.

All his grievances against his former rivals and against the whole ministry were forgotten, and Ivan Ilyitch was entirely happy.

Ivan Ilyitch returned to the country, jocund, contented, as he had not been for a long time. Praskovia Feodorovna also brightened up, and peace was reëstablished between them. Ivan Ilyitch related how he was honored by every one in Petersburg ; how all those who had been his enemies were covered with shame and now fawned on him ; how they envied him his position, and especially how dearly every one in Petersburg loved him.

Praskovia Feodorovna listened to this, and made believe that she believed it, and did not contradict him in anything, but only made plans for the arrangement of their new life in the city where they were going. And Ivan Ilyitch had the joy of seeing that these plans were his plans, that they coincided, and that his life, interrupted though it had been, was now about to regain its own character of festive pleasure and decency.

Ivan Ilyitch went back for a short visit only. On the 22d of September he was obliged to assume his duties ; and, moreover, he needed time to get established in his new place, to transport all his possessions from the province, to buy new things, to give orders for still more, — in a word, to install himself as it seemed proper to his mind, and pretty nearly as it seemed proper to Praskovia Feodorovna's ideas.

And now, when all was ordered so happily, and when he and his wife were in accord, and, above all, lived to-

gether but a small portion of the time, they became better friends than they had been since the first years of their married life.

Ivan Ilyitch at first thought of taking his family with him immediately; but the insistence of his sister- and brother-in-law, who suddenly manifested an extraordinary friendliness and brotherly love for Ivan Ilyitch and his family, induced him to depart alone.

Ivan Ilyitch took his departure; and his jocund frame of mind, arising from his success and his reconciliation with his wife, the one consequent upon the other, did not for a moment leave him.

He found admirable apartments, exactly coinciding with the dreams of husband and wife, — spacious, lofty reception-rooms in the old style; a convenient, grandiose library; rooms for his wife and daughter; study-room for his son, — all as if expressly designed for them. Ivan Ilyitch himself took charge of the arrangements. He selected the wall-papers; he bought the furniture, mostly antique, to which he attributed a specially *comme-il-faut* style;[1] hangings and all took form, and took form and approached that ideal which he had established in his conception.

When his arrangements were half completed, they surpassed his expectations. He perceived what a *comme-il-faut*, exquisite, and far from commonplace character all would have when completed. When he lay down to sleep, he imagined his "hall" as it would be. As he looked about his drawing-room, still unfinished, he already saw the fireplace, the screen, the little *étagère*, and those easy-chairs scattered here and there, those plates and saucers on the walls, and the bronzes, just as they would be when all was in place.

He was delighted with the thought of how he should astonish Pasha and Lizanka, who also had such good taste in these things. "They would never look for this. Especially that he would have the thought of going and buying, at such a low price, these old things that gave the whole an extraordinary character of gentility."

[1] *Komilfotny stil.*

In his letters he purposely represented everything worse than it really was — so as to surprise them. All this so occupied him, that even his new duties, much as he enjoyed them, were not so absorbing as he expected. Even while court was in session, he had his moments of abstraction; he was cogitating as to what sort of cornices he should have for his curtains, — straight or matched. He was so interested in this, that often he himself took hold, rearranged the furniture, and even rehung the curtains himself.

One time, when he was climbing on a pair of steps, so as to explain to a dull-minded upholsterer how he wished a drapery to be arranged, he slipped and fell; but, being a strong, dexterous man, he saved himself. He only hit his side on the edge of the frame. He received a bruise, but it quickly passed away. Ivan Ilyitch all this time felt perfectly happy and well. He wrote, "I feel as if I were fifteen years younger."

He expected to finish in September, but circumstances delayed it till the middle of October. But it was all admirable; not only he himself said so, but all who saw it said the same.

In reality, it was exactly what is customary among those people who are not very rich, but who like to ape the rich, and therefore only resemble one another, — silken fabrics, mahogany, flowers, carpets, and bronzes, dark and shining, all that which all people of a certain class affect, so as to be comparable to all people of a certain class. And in his case, there was a greater resemblance, so that it was impossible to single out anything for attention; but still, this to him was something extraordinary.

When he met his family at the railway station, he took them to their apartments, freshly put in order for them; and the lackey, in a white necktie, opened the door into the vestibule, ornamented with flowers; and then they went into the parlor, the library, and ohed and ahed with delight; and he was very happy; he showed them everything, drank in their praises, and shone with satisfaction. On that very evening at tea,

when Praskovia Feodorovna asked him, among other things, how he fell, he laughed, and illustrated in pantomime how he went head over heels, and scared the upholsterer.

"I 'm not a gymnast for nothing. Another man would have been killed, but I just struck myself here a little; when you touch it, it hurts; but it 's already wearing off — it 's a mere bruise."

And they began to live in the new domicile, in which, as always, after one has become fairly established, it was discovered that there was just one room too few; and with their new means, which, as always, lacked a little of being sufficient; about five hundred rubles additional, and it would have been well.

All went extraordinarily well at first, while still their arrangements were not wholly regulated, and there was still much to do, — buying this thing, giving orders for that, rearranging, mending. Although there were occasional disagreements between husband and wife, yet both were so satisfied, and they had so many occupations, that no serious quarrel resulted. Still, when there was nothing left to arrange, they became a trifle bored, and felt that something was lacking; but now they began to form new acquaintances, new habits, and their lives became full.

Ivan Ilyitch spent the morning at court, but returned home to dinner; and at first he was in excellent humor, although sometimes he was a little vexed by something or other in the household management.

Any kind of spot on the table-cloth, on the draperies, any break in the curtain-cords, irritated him. He had taken so much pains in getting things in order, that any kind of harm befalling was painful to him.

But, on the whole, Ivan Ilyitch's life ran on, as in his opinion life ought to run, smoothly, pleasantly, and decently.

He rose at nine o'clock, drank his coffee, read the paper, then donned his uniform, and went down to court. There he instantly got himself into the harness to which he had been so long accustomed, — petitioners,

inquiries at the chancery, the chancery itself, sessions public and administrative. In all this, it was necessary to devise means to exclude all those external concerns of life which forever tend to trespass on the accuracy of conducting official duties; it was necessary that he should tolerate no relations with people except on an official basis; and the cause for such relations must be official, and the relations themselves must be only official.

For example, a man comes, and wants to know something or other. Ivan Ilyitch, as a man apart from his office, cannot have any relations with this man; but if the relationship of this man to the magistrate is such that it can be expressed on letter-head paper, then, within the limits of these relations, Ivan Ilyitch would do all, absolutely all, in his power, and at the same time preserve the semblance of affable, philanthropical relations, — in other words, of politeness. The point where his official life and his private life joined was very strictly drawn. Ivan Ilyitch had a high degree of skill in separating the official side from the other without confounding them; and his long practice and talent gave him such *finesse*, that he sometimes, as a virtuoso, allowed himself, by way of a jest, to confound the humanitarian and his official relations.

This act in Ivan Ilyitch's case was played, not only smoothly, pleasantly, and decently, but also in a virtuoso manner. During the intervals, he smoked, drank tea, talked a little about politics, a little about affairs in general, a little about cards, and more than all about appointments; and when weary, but still conscious of his virtuosity, as of one who has well played his part, like one of the first violins of an orchestra, he went home.

At home the mother and daughter had been receiving or making calls; the son was at the gymnasium, preparing his lessons with tutors; and he learned accurately whatever was taught him in the gymnasium. All was excellent.

After dinner, unless he had guests, Ivan Ilyitch sometimes read some book which was much talked

about; and during the evening he sat down to his work, — that is, read papers, consulted the laws, compared depositions and applied the law to them.

This was neither tedious nor inspiriting. It was tedious when he had the chance to play *vint;* but if there was no *vint*, then it was far better than to sit alone or with his wife.

Very delightful to Ivan Ilyitch were the little dinners to which he invited ladies and gentlemen holding high positions in society; and such entertainments were like the entertainments of people of the same class, just as his drawing-room was like all drawing-rooms.

One evening they even had a party; they danced, and Ivan Ilyitch felt gay, and all was good; only a great quarrel arose between husband and wife about the patties and sweetmeats. Praskovia Feodorovna had her ideas about them; but Ivan Ilyitch insisted on buying them all of an expensive confectioner, and he got a great quantity of patties; and the quarrel was because there was an extra quantity, and the confectioner's bill amounted to forty-five rubles.

The quarrel was sharp and disagreeable, inasmuch as Praskovia Feodorovna called him "Fool! Pig-head!"

And he, putting his hands to his head in his vexation, muttered something about divorce.

But the party itself was gay. The very best society were present; and Ivan Ilyitch danced with the Princess Trufonova, the sister of the well-known founder of the society called "*Unesi tui mayo gore.*"[1]

Ivan Ilyitch's official pleasures were the pleasures of self-love; his pleasures in society were pleasures of vanity; but his real pleasures were the pleasures of playing *vint*. He confessed that, after all, after any disagreeable event befalling his life, the pleasure which, like a candle, glowed brighter than all others, was that of sitting down — four good players, and partners who did not shout — to a game of *vint* — and always four, for it is very bad form to have any one cut in, even though you say, "I like it very much" — and have a

[1] "Take away my sorrow."

reasonable, serious game — when the cards run well, — and then to eat a little supper, and drink a glass of wine. And Ivan Ilyitch used to go to sleep, especially after a game of *vint*, when he had won a little something — a large sum is disagreeable — and feel particularly happy in his mind.

Thus they lived. The circle of their friends consisted of the very best society; men of high position visited them, and young men came.

As far as their views upon the circle of their acquaintance were concerned, husband, wife, and daughter were perfectly unanimous. And tacitly they each in the same way pushed aside, and rid themselves of, certain friends and relatives, — the undesirable kind, who came fawning around them in their drawing-room decorated with Japanese plates on the wall. Very soon these undesirable friends ceased to flutter around them, and the Golovins had only the very best society.

Young men were attracted to Lizanka; and the examining magistrate, Petrishchef, the son of Dmitri Ivanovitch Petrishchef, and the sole heir to his wealth, began to flutter around Liza so assiduously, that Ivan Ilyitch already asked Praskovia Feodorovna whether it would not be a good plan to take them on a troïka-ride together, or arrange some private theatricals.

Thus they lived. And thus all went along in its even course, and all was very good.

CHAPTER IV

All were well. It was impossible to see any symptom of ill-health in the fact that Ivan Ilyitch sometimes spoke of a strange taste in his mouth and an uneasiness in the left side of his abdomen.

But it happened that this unpleasant feeling kept increasing; it did not as yet become a pain, but he was all the time conscious of a dull weight in his side, and of an irritable temper. This irritability, constantly increasing and increasing, began to disturb the pleasant, easy-going,

decent life that had been characteristic of the Golovin family. The husband and wife began to quarrel more and more frequently; and before long their easy, pleasant relations were broken up, and even the decency was maintained under difficulties.

Scenes once more became very frequent. Once more, but quite infrequently, the little islands appeared, on which husband and wife could meet without an explosion. And Praskovia Feodorovna now said, with some justification, that her husband had a very trying disposition. With her peculiar tendency to exaggeration, she declared that he had always had such a horrible disposition, that nothing but her good nature had enabled her to endure it for twenty years.

It was indeed true that now he was the one that began the quarrels. His querulousness began always before dinner, and often, indeed, just as they sat down to eat the soup. Sometimes he noticed that a dish was chipped; sometimes the food did not suit him; now his son rested his elbows on the table; now it was the way his daughter dressed her hair. And he blamed Praskovia Feodorovna for everything. At first Praskovia Feodorovna answered him back, and said disagreeable things to him; but twice, during dinner-time, he broke out into such a fury that she perceived this to be an unhealthy state, which proceeded from the assimilation of his food; and she held her peace; she did not reply, and merely hastened to finish dinner.

Praskovia Feodorovna regarded her meekness as a great merit. As she had made up her mind that her husband had a horrible disposition, and was making her life wretched, she began to pity herself. And the more she pitied herself, the more she detested her husband. She began to wish that he would die; but she could not wish it, because then they would not have his salary any more. And this actually exasperated her still more against him. She regarded herself as terribly unhappy, from the very fact that his death could not relieve her; and she grew bitter, but concealed it; and this concealed bitterness strengthened her hatred of him.

After one scene in which Ivan Ilyitch was particularly unjust, and which he afterward explained on the ground of his irritability being the result of not being well, she told him that, if he was ill, then he ought to take some medicine; and she begged him to go to a famous physician.

He went. Everything was as he expected: everything was done according to the usual way, — the delay; and the pompous, *doctorial* air of importance, so familiar to him, the same as he himself assumed in court; and the tapping and the auscultation; and the leading questions requiring answers predetermined, and apparently not heard; and the look of superlative wisdom which seemed to say, "You, now, just trust yourself to us, and we will do everything; we understand without fail how to manage; everything is done in the same way for any man."

Everything was just exactly as in court. The airs he put on in court for the benefit of those brought before him, the same were assumed by the famous doctor for his benefit.

The doctor said, "Such and such a thing shows that you have such and such a thing in you; but if this is not confirmed according to the investigations of such and such a man, then you must suppose such and such a thing. Now, if we suppose such and such a thing, then" — and so on.

For Ivan Ilyitch, only one question was momentous: Was his case dangerous, or not? But the doctor ignored this inconvenient question. From a doctor's point of view, this question was idle, and deserved no consideration; the only thing to do was to weigh probabilities, — floating kidney, chronic catarrh, appendicitis.[1]

[1] Russian, "Disease of the blind intestine." "The anatomy is so made sometimes that the kidney on each side may be so loose that it is said to be 'floating' or, more rarely, 'wandering.' In three thousand post-mortem examinations, I have seen some three such cases. The kidney, so loose in its position sometimes, by getting in the wrong place disturbs the anatomy elsewhere; and the surgeon cuts down upon it, and fastens it in its proper place. The spleen is very variable in its size, but does not wander. The blind intestine is the 'head' of the large gut just below where the small gut enters it." — Dr. F. FERGUSON *in note to Translator.*

It was not a question about Ivan Ilyitch's life, but there was doubt whether it was floating kidney, or appendicitis; and this doubt the doctor, in Ivan Ilyitch's presence, settled in the most brilliant manner in favor of the appendix, making a reserve in case an analysis of the urine should give new results, and then the case would have to be examined anew.

All this was exactly what Ivan Ilyitch himself had done a thousand times in the same brilliant manner for the benefit of the prisoner at the bar. Thus, even more brilliantly, the doctor made his *résumé*, and with an air of still more joyful triumph gazed down from over his spectacles on the prisoner at the bar. From the doctor's *résumé*, Ivan Ilyitch came to the conclusion that, as far as he was concerned, it was bad; but as far as the doctor, and perhaps the rest of the world, was concerned, it made no difference; but for him it was bad!

And this conclusion struck Ivan Ilyitch with a painful shock, causing in him a feeling of painful pity for himself, and of painful wrath against this physician who showed such indifference to such a vital question.

But he said nothing; then he got up, laid some money on the table, and, with a sigh, said: —

"Probably we sick men often ask you foolish questions," said he; "but, in general, is this trouble serious, or not?"

The doctor gave him a severe glance with one eye, through the spectacles, as if to say: —

"Prisoner at the bar, if you do not confine yourself to the limits of the questions already put to you, I shall be constrained to take measures for having you put out of the audience-chamber."

"I have already told you what I considered necessary and suitable," said the doctor; "a further examination will complete the diagnosis;" and the doctor bowed him out.

Ivan Ilyitch went out slowly, lugubriously took his seat in his sledge, and drove home. All the way he kept repeating what the doctor had said, endeavoring

to translate all those involved scientific phrases into simple language, and find in them an answer to the question, "Is it a serious, very serious, case for me, or is it a mere nothing?"

And it seemed to him that the sense of all the doctor's words indicated a very serious case. The aspect of everything in the streets was gloomy. The izvoshchiks were gloomy; gloomy the houses, the pedestrians; the shops were gloomy. This pain, this obscure, dull pain, which did not leave him for a second, seemed to him, when taken in connection with the doctor's ambiguous remarks, to gather a new and more serious significance. Ivan Ilyitch, with a new sense of depression, now took heed of it.

He reached home, and began to tell his wife. His wife listened, but while he was in the midst of his account, his daughter came in with her hat on; she was ready to go out with her mother. She sat down with evident disrelish to listen to this wearisome tale, but she was not detained long; her mother did not hear him out.

"Well," said she, "I am very glad, for now you will be careful, and take your medicine properly. Give me the prescription, and I will send Gerasim to the apothecary's."

And she went to get dressed.

He could not get a long breath all the time that she was in the room, and he sighed heavily when she went out.

"Well," said he, "perhaps it 's a mere nothing, after all." ....

He began to take his medicine, and to follow the doctor's prescriptions, which were somewhat modified after the urine had been analyzed. But just here it so happened exactly that in this analysis, and in what ought to have followed it, there was some confusion. It was impossible to trace it back to the doctor, but the result was that what the doctor said to him did not take place. Either he had forgotten or neglected or concealed something from him.

But Ivan Ilyitch nevertheless began faithfully to follow the doctor's prescriptions, and in this way at first he found consolation.

Ivan Ilyitch's principal occupation, after he went to consult the doctor, consisted in carefully carrying out the doctor's prescription in regard to hygiene, and taking his medicine, and watching the symptoms of his malady, all the functions of his organism. Ivan Ilyitch became chiefly interested in human disease and human health. When people spoke in his presence of those who were sick, of those who had died, of those who were recuperating, especially from diseases like his own, he would listen, endeavoring to hide his agitation, would ask questions, and make comparisons with his own ailment.

The pain did not diminish, but Ivan Ilyitch compelled himself to feign that he was getting better. And he was able to deceive himself as long as there was nothing to irritate him. But the moment that he had any disagreeable scene with his wife, any failure at court, a bad hand at *vint*, then he instantly felt the full force of his malady; formerly he endured these reverses, hopefully saying to himself: —

"Now I shall straighten out this wretched business, shall conquer, shall attain success, win the next hand."

But now every little failure cut him down, and plunged him in despair. He said to himself: —

"Here I was just beginning to get a little better, and the medicine was already helping me, and here this cursed bad luck or this unpleasantness...."

And he would break out against his bad luck, or against the people that brought him unpleasantness, and were killing him; and he realized how this fit of anger was killing him, but he could not control it.

It would seem that it must be clear to him that these fits of anger against circumstances and people made his malady worse, and that, therefore, he ought not to notice disagreeable trifles; but he reasoned in precisely the opposite way: he said that he needed quiet; he was on the watch for everything which disturbed this

quiet, and at every least disturbance his irritation broke out.

His condition was rendered worse by the fact that he read medical works, and consulted doctors. The progress of his disease was so gradual that he was able to deceive himself by comparing one evening with the next; there was little difference. But when he consulted the doctors, then it seemed to him that it was growing worse, and very rapidly also. And notwithstanding that he constantly consulted doctors.

During this month he went to another celebrity; the second celebrity said pretty much the same as the first had said, but he asked questions in a different way. And the consultation with this celebrity redoubled Ivan Ilyitch's doubt and fear.

A friend of a friend of his - a very good doctor — gave an absolutely different definition of his malady; and, notwithstanding the fact that he predicted recovery, his questions and hypotheses still further confused Ivan Ilyitch, and increased his doubts.

A homeopathist defined his disease in a still different manner, and gave him some pellets; and Ivan Ilyitch, without being suspected by any one, took them for a week. But at the end of the week, not perceiving that any relief came of them, and losing faith, not only in this, but in his former methods of treatment, he fell into still greater melancholy.

One time a lady of his acquaintance was telling him about cures effected by means of ikons. Ivan Ilyitch surprised himself by listening attentively, and believing in the reality of the fact. This circumstance frightened him.

"Is it possible that I have reached such a degree of mental weakness?" he asked himself. "Nonsense! All rubbish! One must not give way to mere fancies. Now I 'm going to select one physician, and rigorously follow his advice. That 's what I will do. That 's the end of it. I will not bother my brain, and till summer I will strictly carry out his prescription; and then the result will be seen. Now for an end to these hesitations." ....

It was easy to say this, but impossible to carry it out. The pain in his side kept troubling him, kept growing if anything worse, became incessant; the taste in his mouth became always more and more peculiar; it seemed to him that his breath was disagreeable, and that he was all the time losing his appetite and strength.

It was impossible to deceive himself; something terrible, novel, and significant, more significant than anything which had ever happened before to Ivan Ilyitch, was taking place in him. And he alone was conscious of it; those who surrounded him did not comprehend it, or did not wish to comprehend it, and thought that everything in the world was going on as before.

This more than aught else pained Ivan Ilyitch. His family, — especially his wife and daughter, who were in the very white-heat of social pleasures, — he saw, did not comprehend at all, were vexed with him because he was gloomy and exacting, as if he were to blame for it. Even though they tried to hide it, he saw that he was in their way, but that his wife had definitely made up her mind in regard to his trouble, and stuck to it, no matter what he might say or do.

This mental attitude was expressed in some such way as this: —

"You know," she would say to an acquaintance, "Ivan Ilyitch, like all easy-going men, can't carry out the doctor's prescriptions strictly. One day he will take his drops, and eat what is ordered for him, and go to bed in good season; then all of a sudden, if I don't look out, he will forget to take his medicine, will eat sturgeon, — though it is forbidden, — yes, and sit up at *vint* till one o'clock."

"Well, now, when?" asks Ivan Ilyitch, with asperity. "Just once at Piotr Ivanovitch's."

"And last evening with Shebek."

"All right, — I could not sleep from pain." ....

"Yes, no matter what it comes from; only you will never get over it in this way, and will keep on tormenting us."

Praskovia Feodorovna's settled conviction in regard to his ailment, — and she impressed it on every one, and on Ivan Ilyitch himself, — was that he was to blame for it, and that his whole illness was a new affliction which he was causing his wife. Ivan Ilyitch felt that this was involuntary on her part, but it was not on that account any easier for him to bear it.

In court Ivan Ilyitch noticed, or thought he noticed, the same strange behavior toward him; now it seemed to him that he was regarded as a man who was soon to give up his place; again, his friends would suddenly begin to rally him about his low spirits, as if this horrible, strange, and unheard-of something that was breeding in him and ceaselessly sucking up his vitality, and irresistibly dragging him away, were a pleasant subject for raillery! Schwartz especially irritated him with his jocularity, his lively ways, and his *comme-il-faut-ness*, reminding Ivan Ilyitch of himself as he had been ten years before.

Friends came in to have a game of cards. They sat down, they dealt, new cards were shuffled, diamonds were thrown on diamonds, — seven of them. His partner said, "No trumps," and held up two diamonds. What more could be desired? It ought to have been a gay proud moment, — a clean sweep.[1]

And suddenly Ivan Ilyitch was conscious of that living pain, of that taste in his mouth, and it seemed to him barbarous that he should be able thus to rejoice in this hand. He looked at Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch, his partner, as he rapped the table with his big red hand, and courteously and condescendingly refrained from gathering up the tricks, but pushed them over to Ivan Ilyitch that he might have the pleasure of counting them, without inconveniencing himself, without putting his hand out.

"What! does he think that I am so weak that I can't put my hand out?" said Ivan Ilyitch to himself; then he forgot what were trumps; trumped his partner's trick, and lost the sweep by three points. And what

[1] *Shlem*, English "slam."

was more terrible than all was that he saw how Mikhaïl Mikhaïlovitch suffers, and yet to him it was a matter of indifference. And it was terrible to think why it was a matter of indifference to him.

All could see that it was hard for him, and they said to him: —

"We can stop playing if you are tired. You rest awhile." ....

Rest? No, he was not tired at all; they would finish the rubber. All were gloomy and taciturn. Ivan Ilyitch felt that he was the cause of their gloominess, and he could not enliven it. They had supper, and then went home; and Ivan Ilyitch was left alone, with the consciousness that his life is poisoned for him, and that he is poisoning the lives of others, and that this poison is not growing weaker, but is always working its way deeper and deeper into his being.

And with this consciousness, sometimes also with physical pain, sometimes with terror, he would have to go to bed, and frequently not sleep from anguish the greater part of the night. And in the morning he would have to get up again and dress and go to court and speak, write, and, unless he went out to ride, stay at home for those twenty-four hours, each one of which was a torture. And he had to live thus on the edge of destruction — alone, without any one to understand him and pity him.

CHAPTER V

Thus passed one month and two.

Before New Year's his brother-in-law came to their city, and stopped at their house. Praskovia Feodorovna had gone out shopping. Ivan Ilyitch was in court. When he came home, and went into his library, he found his brother-in-law there, a healthy, sanguine man, engaged in opening his trunk. He raised his head as he heard Ivan Ilyitch's steps, and looked at him a moment in silence. This look revealed all to Ivan

Ilyitch. His brother-in-law opened his mouth to exclaim at him, and refrained. This motion confirmed everything.

"What? Have I changed?"

"Yes .... there is a change."

And whenever afterward Ivan Ilyitch tried to bring the conversation round to the subject of his external appearance, his brother-in-law avoided it. Praskovia Feodorovna came in and his brother-in-law went to her room. Ivan Ilyitch locked the door, and began to look at himself in the glass, first front face, then his profile. He took his portrait painted with his wife, and compared it with what he saw in the mirror. The change was portentous. Then he bared his arm to the elbow, looked at it, pulled down his sleeve, sat down on the otomanka, and it became darker than night.

"It must not .... it must not be!" said he to himself; jumped up, went to the table, unfolded a document, began to read it, but could not. He opened the door, went out into the "hall." The drawing-room door was shut. He tiptoed up to it, and began to listen.

"No, you exaggerate," Praskovia Feodorovna was saying.

"How do I exaggerate? Is n't it plain to you? He 's a dead man. Look at his eyes, no light in them. .... But what 's the matter with him?"

"No one knows. Nikolayef"—that was another doctor—"says one thing, but I don't know about it. Leshchititsky"—that was the famous doctor—"says the opposite." ....

Ivan Ilyitch turned away, went to his room, lay down, and began to think: "Kidney—a floating kidney!"

He recalled all that the doctors had told him,—how it was torn away, and how it was loose. And by an effort of his imagination he endeavored to catch this kidney, to stop it, to fasten it. "It is such a small thing to do," it seemed to him.

"No; I will make another visit to Piotr Ivanovitch."

This was the friend whose friend was a doctor.

He rang, ordered the horse to be harnessed, and got ready to go out.

"Where are you going, *Jean?*" asked his wife, with a peculiarly gloomy and unusually gentle expression.

This unusually gentle expression angered him. He looked at her grimly.

"I have got to go to Piotr Ivanovitch's."

He went to the friend whose friend was a doctor. They went together to this doctor's. He found him and had a long talk with him.

As he examined the anatomical and physiological details of what, according to the doctor, was taking place in him, he comprehended it perfectly.

There was one more trifle — the least bit of a trifle in the vermiform appendix. All that could be put to rights. Strengthen the force of one organ, weaken the activity of another — assimilation ensues, and all is set to rights.

He was a little late to dinner. He ate heartily, he talked gayly, but for a long time he was not able to make up his mind to go to work.

At last he went to his library, and immediately sat down to his labors. He read his documents, and labored over them; but he did not get rid of the consciousness that he had before him an important, private duty, which he must carry out to a conclusion.

When he had finished with his documents, he remembered that this private duty was the thought about the vermiform appendix. But he did not give in to it; he went to the drawing-room to tea. They had callers; there was conversation, there was playing on the pianoforte, and singing; the examining magistrate, the desirable match for their daughter, was there. Ivan Ilyitch spent the evening, as Praskovia Feodorovna observed, more cheerfully than usual; but he did not for a moment forget that he had before him those important thoughts about the vermiform appendix.

At eleven o'clock he bade his friends good-night, and retired to his own room. Since his illness began, he had slept alone in a little room off the library. He

went to it, undressed, and took a romance of Zola's; but he did not read it; he thought. And in his imagination the longed-for cure of the vermiform appendix took place. Assimilation, secretion, were stimulated; regulated activity was established.

"Yes, it is just exactly so," said he to himself. "It is only necessary to help nature."

He remembered his medicine, got up, took it, lay on his back, waiting for the medicine to have its beneficent effect, and gradually ease his pain.

"Only take it regularly, and avoid unhealthy influences; even now I feel a little better, considerably better."

He began to punch his side; it was not painful to the touch.

"No, I don't feel it.... already I feel considerably better."

He blew out the candle, and lay on his side. .... "The vermiform appendix becomes regulated, is absorbed...."

And suddenly he began to feel the old, well-known, dull, lingering pain, stubborn, silent, serious; in his mouth the same well-known taste. His heart sank within him; his brain was in a whirl.

"My God! my God!" he cried, "again, again! and it will never cease!"

And suddenly the trouble presented itself to him absolutely in another guise.

"The vermiform appendix! the kidney!" he said to himself. "The trouble lies, not in the blind intestine, not in the kidney.... but in life.... and death! Yes, once there was life; but now it is passing away, passing away, and I cannot hold it back. Yes. Why deceive one's self? Is it not evident to every one, except myself, that I am going to die? and it is only a question of weeks, of days.... maybe instantly. It was light, but now darkness.... Now I was here, but then I shall be there! Where?"

A chill ran over him, his breathing ceased. He heard only the thumping of his heart.

"I shall not be, but what will be? There will be nothing. Then, where shall I be when I am no more? Will that be death? No, I will not have it!"

He leaped up, wished to light the candle, fumbled about with trembling hands, knocked the candle and candlestick to the floor, and again fell back on the pillow.

"Wherefore? It is all the same," he said to himself, gazing into the darkness with wide-open eyes.

"Death! Yes, death! And *they* know nothing about it, and wish to know nothing about it; and they do not pity me. They are playing." — He heard through the door the distant sound of voices and *ritornelles*. — "To them it is all the same .... and they also will die. Little fools! I first, and they after me. It will be their turn also. But they are enjoying themselves! Cattle!"

Anger choked him, and he felt an insupportably heavy burden of anguish.

"It cannot be that all men have been exposed to this horrible terror."

He lifted himself once more.

"No, it is not so at all. I must calm myself; I must think it all over from the beginning."

And here he began to reflect: —

"Yes, the beginning of the trouble. I hit my side, and I was just the same as before, one day and the next, only a little ache, then more severe, then the doctor, then low spirits, anxiety, the doctor again. And I am all the time coming nearer and nearer to the abyss. Less strength. Nearer, nearer! And how wasted I am! I have no light in my eyes. And death .... and I thinking about the intestine! I am thinking only how to cure my intestine; but this is death! — Is it really death?"

Again fear fell on him. He panted, bent over, tried to find the matches, hit his elbow against the table. It hindered him, and hurt him; he lost his patience, pushed angrily against it with more violence, and tipped it over. And in despair, all out of breath, he fell back, expecting death instantly.

At this time the visitors were going. Praskovia

Feodorovna was showing them out. She heard the table fall, and came in.

"What is the matter?"

"Nothing .... I unintentionally knocked it over."

She went out, and brought in a candle. He was lying, breathing heavily, and quickly, like a man who has just run a verst; his eyes were staring at her.

"What is it, *Jean?*"

"No-o-thing. I .... knock-ed .... over. .... Why say anything? she will not understand," he thought.

She did not in the least understand. She picked up the table, lighted the candle for him, and hurried out. She had to say good-night to her company.

When she came back, he was still lying on his back, looking up.

"What is the matter? Are you worse?"

"Yes."

She shook her head, and sat down.

"Do you know, *Jean*, I think we had better send for Leshchititsky? don't you?"

That meant, send for the celebrated doctor, and not mind the expense. He smiled bitterly, and said: —

"No."

She sat a moment, then came to him, and kissed him on the forehead.

He abhorred her, with all the strength of his soul, at that moment when she kissed him; and he had to restrain himself from pushing her away.

"Good-night![1] God give you pleasant sleep!"

"Yes."

CHAPTER VI

Ivan Ilyitch saw that he was going to die, and he was in perpetual despair.

In the depths of his soul, he knew that he was going to die; but he not only failed to get used to the thought, but also simply did not comprehend it, could not comprehend it.

[1] *Proshchaï.*

This form of syllogism, which he had studied in Kiziveter's "Logic," — "Kaï[1] is a man, men are mortal, therefore Kaï is mortal," — had seemed to him all his life true only in its application to Kaï, but never to himself. It was Kaï as man, as man in general, and in this respect it was perfectly correct; but he was not Kaï, and not man in general, and he had always been an entity absolutely, absolutely distinct from all others; he had been Vanya with mamma and papa, with Mitya and Volodya,[2] with his playthings, the coachman, with the nurse; then with Katenka, with all the joys, sorrows, enthusiasms of childhood, boyhood, youth.

Was it Kaï who smelt the odor of the little striped leather ball that Vanya had loved so dearly? Was it Kaï who had kissed his mother's hand? and was it for Kaï that the silken folds of his mother's dress had rustled so pleasantly? Was it he who made a conspiracy for the tarts at the law-school? Was it Kaï who had been so deeply in love? Was it Kaï who had such ability in conducting the sessions?

"And Kaï is certainly mortal, and it is proper that he should die; but for me, Vanya, Ivan Ilyitch, with all my feelings, my thoughts, — for me, that is another thing, and it cannot be that I must take my turn and die. That would be too horrible."

This was the way that he felt about it: —

"If I were going to die, like Kaï, then, surely, I should have known it; some internal voice would have told me; but nothing of the sort happened in me, and I myself, and my friends, all of us, have perceived that it was absolutely different in our case from what it was with Kaï. But now how is it?" he said to himself. "It cannot be, it cannot be, but it is! How is this? How understand it?"

And he could not understand it; and he endeavored to put away this thought as false, unjust, unwholesome, and to supplant it with other thoughts true and wholesome. But this thought, not merely as a thought, but,

[1] The typical being in logic, like our A. *Kaï* means "word."
[2] Diminutions respectively of Ivan, Dmitri, and Vladimir.

as it were, a reality, kept recurring and taking form before him.

And he summoned in place of this thought other thoughts, one after the other, in the hope of finding succor in them. He strove to return to his former course of reasoning, which hid from him of old the thought of death. But, strangely enough, all that which formerly hid, concealed, destroyed the image of death, was now incapable of producing that effect.

Ivan Ilyitch came to spend the larger part of his time in these attempts to restore the former current of feeling which put death out of sight. Sometimes he said to himself: —

"I will take up my duties again; they certainly kept me alive."

And he went to court, driving away every sort of doubt. He joined his colleagues in conversation, and sat down, according to his old habit, pensively looking with dreamy eyes on the throng, and resting his two emaciated hands on the arms of his oak chair, leaning over, just as usual, toward his colleague, running through the brief, whispering his comments; and then, suddenly lifting his eyes, and sitting straight, he pronounced the well-known words, and began business.

But suddenly, right in the midst of it, the pain in his side, entirely disregarding the time of public business, began its simultaneous business. Ivan Ilyitch perceived it, tried to turn his thoughts from it; but it took its course, and DEATH[1] came up and stood directly before him, and gazed at him: and he was stupefied; the fire died out in his eyes, and he began once more to ask himself: —

"Is there nothing true save IT?"

And his colleagues and subordinates saw with surprise and concern that he, this brilliant, keen judge, was confused, was making mistakes.

He shook himself, tried to collect his thoughts, and in a way conducted the session till it adjourned, and then returned home with the melancholy consciousness

[1] *Ona*, "she"; that is, death, or the thought of death.

that he no longer had the ability, as of old, to separate between his judicial acts and what he wished to put out of his thoughts; that even in the midst of his judicial acts, he could not deliver himself from IT. And what was worse than all, was the fact that IT distracted his attention, not to make him do anything, but only to make him look at IT, straight in the eye, — look at IT, and, though doing nothing, suffer beyond words.

And, while attempting to escape from this state of things, Ivan Ilyitch sought relief, sought other shelter; and other aids came along, and for a short time seemed to help him; but immediately they not so much failed, as grew transparent, as if IT became visible through all, and nothing could hide it.

It happened in this latter part of the time that he went into the drawing-room which he had decorated, — that very drawing-room where he had met with the fall, for which he — as he had to think with bitterness and scorn — for the decoration of which he had sacrificed his life; because he knew that his malady began with that bruise: he went in, and saw that on the varnished table was a scratch, cut by something. He sought for the cause of it, and found it in the bronze decoration of an album, which was turned up at the edge. He took the precious album, lovingly filled by him, and broke out in a passion against the carelessness of his daughter and her friends, who destroyed things so, who dog-eared photographs. He put this carefully to rights, and bent back the ornament.

Then the idea occurred to him to transfer this *établissement*,[1] albums and all, to the other corner, where the flowers were. He summoned a servant. Either his wife or his daughter came to his help; they did not agree with him; they argued against the change: he argued, he lost his temper; but everything was good, because he did not think about IT, IT did not appear.

But here, as he himself was beginning to shift the things, his wife said: —

[1] In French in the original.

"Hold on! the men will attend to that; you will strain yourself again."

And suddenly IT gleamed through the shelter; he saw IT. IT gleamed; he was already hoping that IT had disappeared, but involuntarily he watched for the pain in his side — there it was, all the time, always making its advance; and he could not forget it, and IT clearly gazed at him from among the flowers. What was the purpose of it all?

"And it is true that here I have lost my life on that curtain as in a charge! Is it possible? How horrible and how ridiculous! It cannot be! It cannot be! but it is."

He went back to his library, went to bed, and found himself again alone with IT. Face to face with IT. But to do anything with IT — impossible! Only to look at IT, and grow chill!

CHAPTER VII

How it came about in the third month of Ivan Ilyitch's illness, it was impossible to say, because it came about step by step, imperceptibly; but it came about that his wife and daughter, and his son and the servants, and his acquaintances and the doctors, and chiefly he himself, knew that all the interest felt in him by others was concentrated in this one thing, — how soon he would vacate his place, would free the living from the constraint caused by his presence, and be himself freed from his sufferings.

He slept less and less; they gave him opium, and began to try hypodermic injections of morphine. But this did not relieve him. The dull distress which he experienced in his half-drowsy condition at first merely afforded the relief of change; but soon it came back as severe as ever, or even more intense than open pain.

They prepared for him special dishes, according to the direction of the physicians; but these dishes became ever more and more tasteless, more and more repugnant to him.

Special arrangements also had been made, so that he might perform the wants of nature; and each time it became more trying for him. The torture came from the uncleanliness, the indecency, of it, and the ill odor, from the knowledge that he required the assistance of another.

But from this very same disagreeable circumstance Ivan Ilyitch drew a consolation. His butler, the muzhik Gerasim, always came to set things to rights.

Gerasim was a clean, ruddy young muzhik, who had grown stout in waiting on the table in the city houses. He was always festive, always serene. From the very first, the sight of this man, always so neatly attired in his Russian costume, engaged in this repulsive task, made Ivan Ilyitch ashámed.

One time, after he had got up and was feeling too weak to lift his pantaloons, he threw himself into an easy-chair and was contemplating with horror his bare thighs with their strangely flabby muscles standing out.

Gerasim came in with light, buoyant steps, in thick boots, diffusing an agreeable odor of tar from his boots, and the freshness of the winter air. He wore a clean hempen apron and a clean cotton shirt, with the cuffs rolled up on his bare, strong young arms; and, not looking at Ivan Ilyitch, evidently curbing the joy in life which shone in his face, so as not to offend the sick man, he began to do his work.

"Gerasim," said Ivan Ilyitch, in a weak voice.

Gerasim started, evidently fearing that he had failed in some duty, and turned toward the sick man his fresh, good, simple young face, on which the beard was only just beginning to sprout.

"What can I do for you?"

"This, I am thinking, is disagreeable to you. Forgive me. I cannot help it."

"Do not mention it."[1] And Gerasim's eyes shone, and he showed his white young teeth. "Why should I not do you this service? It is for a sick man."

And with expert, strong hands, he fulfilled his wonted

[1] *Pomiluïte-s.*

task and went out with light steps. After five minutes he returned, still walking with light steps. He had made everything clean and sweet.

Ivan Ilyitch was still sitting in his arm-chair.

"Gerasim," he said, "be good enough to assist me. Come here."

Gerasim went to him.

"Lift me up. It is hard for me alone, and I sent Dmitri away."

Gerasim went to him. In just the same way as he walked, he lifted him with his strong arm, deftly, gently, and held him. With his other hand he adjusted his clothing, and then was about to let him sit down. But Ivan Ilyitch requested him to help him to the divan. Gerasim, without effort, and exercising no sensible pressure, supported him, almost carrying him, to the divan, and set him down.

"Thank you. How easily, how well, you do it all!"

Gerasim again smiled, and was about to go. But Ivan Ilyitch felt so good with him, that he wanted him to stay.

"Wait! Please bring me that chair.... no; that one there. Put it under my feet. It is easier for me when my feet are raised."

Gerasim brought the chair, put it down noiselessly, arranged so that it sat even on the floor, and put Ivan Ilyitch's legs on the chair. It seemed to Ivan Ilyitch that he felt more comfortable while Gerasim was holding up his legs.

"It is better when my legs are up," said Ivan Ilyitch. "Bring me that cushion."

Gerasim did this. Again he lifted his legs, and arranged it all. Again Ivan Ilyitch felt better while Gerasim was holding his legs. When he put them down, he felt worse.

"Gerasim," said he, "are you busy just now?"

"Not at all,"[1] said Gerasim, having learned of city people how to speak with gentlefolk.

"What more have you to do?"

[1] *Nikak-nyet-s.*

"What more have I to do? Everything has been done, except splitting wood against to-morrow."

"Then, hold my legs a little higher, can you?"

"Why not? Of course I can!"

Gerasim lifted his legs higher, and it seemed to Ivan Ilyitch that in this position he felt no pain at all.

"But how about the wood?"

"Don't be worried about that. We shall have time enough."

Ivan Ilyitch bade Gerasim to sit down and hold his legs, and he talked with him. And, strangely enough, it seemed to him that he felt better while Gerasim was holding his legs.

From that time forth Ivan Ilyitch would sometimes call Gerasim, and make him hold his legs on his shoulders, and he liked to talk with him. Gerasim did this easily, willingly, simply, and with a goodness of heart which touched Ivan Ilyitch. In all other people, good health, strength, and vigorous life affronted Ivan Ilyitch; but Gerasim's strength and vigorous life did not affront Ivan Ilyitch, but calmed him.

Ivan Ilyitch's chief torment was a lie, — the lie somehow accepted by every one, that he was only sick, but not dying, and that he needed only to be calm, and trust to the doctors, and then somehow he would come out all right. But *he* knew that, whatever was done, nothing would come of it, except still more excruciating anguish and death. And this lie tormented him; it tormented him that they were unwilling to acknowledge what all knew as well as he knew, but preferred to lie to him about his terrible situation, and made him also a party to this lie. This lie, this lie, it clung to him, even to the very evening of his death; this lie, tending to reduce the strange, solemn act of his death to the same level as visits, curtains, sturgeon for dinner — it was horribly painful for Ivan Ilyitch. And strange! many times, when they were playing this farce for his benefit, he was within a hair's-breadth of shouting at them: —

"Stop your foolish lies! you know as well as I know that I am dying, and so at least stop lying."

But he never had the spirit to do this. The strange, terrible act of his dissolution, he saw, was reduced by all who surrounded him to the grade of an accidental unpleasantness, often unseemly — when he was treated as a man who should come into the drawing-room and diffuse about him a bad odor — and contrary to those principles of "propriety" which he had served all his life. He saw that no one pitied him, because no one was willing even to appreciate his situation. Only Gerasim appreciated his situation, and pitied him. And, therefore, Ivan Ilyitch was contented only when Gerasim was with him.

He was contented when Gerasim for whole nights at a time held his legs, and did not care to go to sleep, saying: —

"Don't you trouble yourself, Ivan Ilyitch; I shall get sleep enough."

Or when suddenly, using *thou* instead of *you*, he would add: —

"If thou wert not sick.... but since thou art, why not serve thee?"

Gerasim alone did not lie: in every way it was evident that he alone comprehended what the trouble was, and thought it unnecessary to hide it, and simply pitied his sick barin, who was wasting away. He even said directly when Ivan Ilyitch wanted to send him off to bed: —

"We shall all die. Then, why should I not serve you?" he said, meaning by this that he was not troubled by his extra work, for precisely the reason that he was doing it for a dying man, and he hoped that, when his time came, some one would undertake the same service for him.

Besides this lie, or in consequence of it, Ivan Ilyitch felt the greatest torment from the fact that no one pitied him as he longed for them to pity him. At some moments after long agonies he yearned more than all — although he would have been the last to confess it — he yearned for some one to pity him as a sick child is pitied. He longed to be caressed, to be kissed, to be wept for,

as a child is caressed and comforted. He knew that he was a magistrate of importance, that his beard was turning gray, and that hence it was impossible; but nevertheless he longed for it. And in his relations with Gerasim there was something that approached this. And, therefore, his relations with Gerasim comforted him.

Ivan Ilyitch would have liked to weep, would have liked to be caressed, and have tears shed for him; and here came his colleague, the member Shebek, and, instead of weeping and being caressed, Ivan Ilyitch puts on a serious, stern, melancholy expression of countenance, and with all his energy speaks his opinions concerning the significance of a judgment of cassation, and obstinately stands up for it.

This lie surrounding him, and existing in him, more than all else poisoned Ivan Ilyitch's last days.

CHAPTER VIII

It was morning.

It was morning merely because Gerasim had gone, and Piotr, the lackey, had come. He put out the candles, opened one curtain, and began noiselessly to put things to rights. Whether it were morning, whether it were evening, Friday or Sunday, all was a matter of indifference to him, all was one and the same thing. The agonizing, shooting pain, never for an instant appeased; the consciousness of a life hopelessly wasting away, but not yet departed; the same terrible, cursed death coming nearer and nearer, the one reality, and always the same lie, — what matter, then, here, of days, weeks, and hours of the day?

"Will you not have me bring the tea?"

"He must follow form, and that requires masters to take tea in the morning," he thought; and he said merely: —

"No."

"Would n't you like to go over to the divan?"

"He has to put the room in order, and I hinder him; I am uncleanness, disorder!" he thought to himself, and said merely:—

"No; leave me!"

The lackey still bustled about a little. Ivan Ilyitch put out his hand. Piotr officiously hastened to him:—

"What do you wish?"

"My watch."

Piotr got the watch, which lay near by, and gave it to him.

"Half-past eight. They aren't up yet?"

"No one at all. Vasili Ivanovitch"—that was his son—"has gone to school, and Praskovia Feodorovna gave orders to wake her up if you asked for her. Do you wish it?"

"No, it is not necessary.—Shall I not try the tea?" he asked himself. "Yes.... tea.... bring me some."

Piotr started to go out. Ivan Ilyitch felt terror-stricken at being left alone. "How can I keep him? Yes, my medicine. Piotr, give me my medicine.—Why not? perhaps the medicine may help me yet."

He took the spoon, sipped it.

"No, there is no help. All this is nonsense and delusion," he said, as he immediately felt the familiar, mawkish, hopeless taste.

"No, I cannot have any faith in it. But this pain, ... why this pain? Would that it might cease for a minute!"

And he began to groan. Piotr came back.

"Nothing .... go! Bring the tea."

Piotr went out. Ivan Ilyitch, left alone, began to groan, not so much from the pain, although it was horrible, as from mental anguish.

"Always the same thing, and the same thing; all these endless days and nights. Would it might come very soon! What very soon? Death, blackness? No, no! Anything rather than death!"

When Piotr came back with the tea on a tray, Ivan Ilyitch stared long at him in bewilderment, not comprehending who he was, what he was. Piotr was

abashed at this gaze; and when Piotr showed his confusion, Ivan Ilyitch came to himself.

"Oh, yes," said he, "the tea; very well, set it down. Only help me to wash, and to put on a clean shirt."

And Ivan Ilyitch began to perform his toilet. With resting spells he washed his hands and face, cleaned his teeth, began to comb his hair, and looked into the mirror. It seemed frightful, perfectly frightful, to him, to see how his hair lay flat upon his pale brow.

While he was changing his shirt, he knew that it would be still more frightful if he gazed at his body; and so he did not look at himself. But now it was done. He put on his khalat, wrapped himself in his plaid, and sat down in his easy-chair to take his tea. For a single moment he felt refreshed; but as soon as he began to drink the tea, again that same taste, that same pain. He compelled himself to drink it all, and lay down, stretching out his legs. He lay down, and let Piotr go.

Always the same thing. Now a drop of hope gleaming, then a sea of despair rising up, and always pain, always melancholy, and always the same monotony. It was terribly melancholy to the lonely man; he longed to call in some one, but he knew in advance that it is still worse when others are present.

"Even morphine again.... to get a little sleep!.... I will tell him, tell the doctor, to find something else. It is impossible, impossible so."

One hour, two hours, would pass in this way. But there! the bell in the corridor. Perhaps it is the doctor. Exactly: it is the doctor, fresh, hearty, portly, jovial, with an expression as if he said, "You may feel apprehension of something or other, but we will immediately straighten things out for you."

The doctor knows that this expression is not appropriate here; but he has already put it on once for all, and he cannot rid himself of it — like a man who has put on his dress-coat in the morning, and gone to make calls.

The doctor rubs his hands with an air of hearty assurance.

"I am cold. A healthy frost. Let me get warm a little," says he, with just the expression that signifies that all he needs is to wait until he gets warmed a little, and, when he is warmed, then he will straighten things out.

"Well, now, how goes it?"

Ivan Ilyitch feels that the doctor wants to say, "How go your little affairs?" but that he feels that it is impossible to say so; and he says, "What sort of a night did you have?"

Ivan Ilyitch would look at the doctor with an expression which seemed to ask the question, "Are you never ashamed of lying?"

But the doctor has no desire to understand his question.

And Ivan Ilyitch *says:* —

"It was just horrible! The pain does not cease, does not disappear. If you could only give me something for it!"

"That is always the way with you sick folks! Well, now, it seems to me I am warm enough; even the most particular Praskovia Feodorovna would not find anything to take exception to in my temperature. Well, now, how are you really?"

And the doctor shakes hands with him.

And, laying aside his former jocularity, the doctor begins with serious mien to examine the sick man, his pulse and temperature, and he renews the tappings and the auscultation.

Ivan Ilyitch knew for a certainty, and beyond peradventure, that all this was nonsense and foolish deception; but when the doctor, on his knees, leaned over toward him, applying his ear, now higher up, now lower down, and with most sapient mien performed various gymnastic evolutions on him, Ivan Ilyitch succumbed to him, as once he succumbed to the discourses of the lawyers, even when he knew perfectly well that they were deceiving him, and why they were deceiving him.

The doctor, still on his knees on the divan, was still performing the auscultation, when at the door were heard the rustle of Praskovia Feodorovna's silk dress, and her

words of blame to Piotr because he had not informed her of the doctor's visit.

She came in, kissed her husband, and immediately began to explain that she had been up a long time; and only through a misunderstanding she had not been there when the doctor came.

Ivan Ilyitch looked at her, observed her from head to foot, and felt a secret indignation at her fairness and her plumpness, and the cleanliness of her hands, her neck, her glossy hair, and the brilliancy of her eyes, brimming with life. He hated her with all the strength of his soul, and her touch made him suffer an actual paroxysm of hatred of her.

Her attitude toward him and his malady was the same as before. Just as the doctor had formulated his treatment of his patient and could not change it, so she had formulated her treatment of him, making him feel that he was not doing what he ought to do, and was himself to blame; and she liked to reproach him for this, and she could not change her attitude toward him.

"Now, just see! he does not heed, he does not take his medicine regularly; and, above all, he lies in a position that is surely bad for him — his feet up."

She related how he made Gerasim hold his legs.

The doctor listened with a disdainfully good-natured smile, as much as to say: —

"What is to be done about it, pray? These sick folks are always conceiving some such foolishness. But you must let it go."

When the examination was over, the doctor looked at his watch; and then Praskovia Feodorovna declared to Ivan Ilyitch that, whether he was willing or not, she was going that very day to call in the celebrated doctor to come and have an examination and consultation with Mikhaïl Danilovitch — that was the name of their ordinary doctor.

"Now, don't oppose it, please. I am doing this for my own self," she said ironically, giving him to understand that she did it all for him, and only on this account did not allow him the right to oppose her.

He said nothing, and frowned. He felt that this lie surrounding him was so complicated that it was now hard to escape from it.

She did all this for him, only in her own interest; and she said that she was doing it for him, while she was in reality doing it for herself, as some incredible thing, so that he was forced to take it in its opposite sense.

The celebrated doctor, in fact, came about half-past eleven. Once more they had auscultations; and learned discussions took place before him, or in the next room, about his kidney, about the blind intestine, and questions and answers in such a learned form that again the place of the real question of life and death, which now alone faced him, was driven away by the question of the kidney and the blind intestine, which were not acting as became them, and on which Mikhaïl Danilovitch and the celebrity were to fall instantly and compel to attend to their duties.

The famous doctor took leave with a serious but not hopeless expression. And in reply to the timid question which Ivan Ilyitch's eyes, shining with fear and hope, asked of him, whether there was a possibility of his getting well, it replied that it could not vouch for it, but there was a possibility.

The look of hope with which Ivan Ilyitch followed the doctor was so pathetic that Praskovia Feodorovna, seeing it, even wept, as she went out of the library door in order to give the celebrated doctor his honorarium.

The raising of his spirits, caused by the doctor's hopefulness, was but temporary. Again the same room, the same pictures, curtains, wall-paper, vials, and his aching, pain-broken body. And Ivan Ilyitch began to groan. They gave him a subcutaneous injection, and he fell asleep.

When he woke up it was beginning to grow dusky. They brought him his dinner. He forced himself to eat a little *bouillon*. And again the same monotony, and again the advancing night.

About seven o'clock, after dinner, Praskovia Feodorovna came into his room, dressed as for a party, with

her exuberant bosom swelling in her stays, and with traces of powder on her face. She had already that morning told him that they were going to the theater. Sarah Bernhardt had come to town, and they had a box which he had insisted on their taking.

Now he had forgotten about that, and her toilet offended him. But he concealed his vexation when he recollected that he himself had insisted on their taking a box, and going, on the ground that it would be an instructive, esthetic enjoyment for the children.

Praskovia Feodorovna came in self-satisfied, but, as it were, feeling a little to blame. She sat down, asked after his health, as he saw, only for the sake of asking, and not so as to learn, knowing that there was nothing to learn, and began to say what was incumbent on her to say, — that she would not have gone for anything, but that they had taken the box; and that Elen and her daughter and Petrishchef — the examining magistrate, her daughter's betrothed — were going, and it was impossible to let them go alone, but that it would have been more agreeable to her to stay at home with him. Only he should be sure to follow the doctor's prescriptions in her absence.

"Yes — and Feodor Petrovitch" — the betrothed — "wanted to come in. May he? And Liza!"

"Let them come."

The daughter came in, in evening dress, with her fair young body, — her body that made his anguish more keen. But she paraded it before him, strong, healthy, evidently in love, and irritated against the disease, the suffering, and death which stood in the way of her happiness.

Feodor Petrovitch also entered, in his dress-coat, with curly hair *à la Capoul*, with long, sinewy neck tightly incased in a white standing collar, with a huge white bosom, and his long, muscular legs in tight black trousers, with a white glove on one hand, and with an opera hat.[1]

Immediately behind him, almost unnoticed, came the gymnasium scholar, in his new uniform, poor little fellow,

[1] *Klak*, from French *claque*.

with gloves on, and with that terrible blue circle under the eyes, the meaning of which Ivan Ilyitch understood.

He always felt a pity for his son. And terrible was his timid and compassionate glance. With the exception of Gerasim, Vasya alone, it seemed to Ivan Ilyitch, understood and pitied him.

All sat down; again they asked after his health. Silence ensued. Liza asked her mother if she had the opera-glasses. A dispute arose between mother and daughter as to who had mislaid them. It was a disagreeable episode.

Feodor Petrovitch asked Ivan Ilyitch if he had seen Sarah Bernhardt. Ivan Ilyitch did not at first understand his question, but in a moment he said: —

"No .... why, have you seen her yet?"

"Yes, in 'Adrienne Lecouvreur.'"

Praskovia Feodorovna said that she was especially good in that. The daughter disagreed with her. A conversation arose about the grace and realism of her acting, — the same conversation, which is always and forever one and the same thing.

In the midst of the conversation, Feodor Petrovitch glanced at Ivan Ilyitch, and grew silent. The others glanced at him, and grew silent. Ivan Ilyitch was looking straight ahead with gleaming eyes, evidently indignant at them. Some one had to extricate them from their embarrassment, but there seemed to be no way out of it. No one spoke; and a panic seized them all, lest suddenly this ceremonial lie should somehow be shattered, and the absolute truth become manifest to all.

Liza was the first to speak. She broke the silence. She wished to hide what all felt, but she betrayed it.

"One thing is certain, — *if we are going*, it is time," she said, glancing at her watch, her father's gift; and giving the young man a sign, scarcely perceptible, and yet understood by him, she smiled, and arose in her rustling dress.

All arose, said good-by, and went.

When they had gone, Ivan Ilyitch thought that he felt easier: the lying was at an end; it had gone with

them; but the pain remained. Always this same pain, always this same terror, made it hard as hard could be. There was no easing of it. It grew ever worse, always worse.

Again minute after minute dragged by, hour after hour, forever the same monotony, and forever endless, and forever more terrible — the inevitable end.

"Yes, send me Gerasim," was his reply to Piotr's question.

CHAPTER IX

LATE at night his wife returned. She came in on her tiptoes, but he heard her; he opened his eyes, and quickly closed them again. She wanted to send Gerasim away, and sit with him herself. He opened his eyes, and said: —

"No, go away."

"You suffer very much."

"It makes no difference."

"Take some opium."

He consented, and drank it. She went.

Until three o'clock he was in a painful sleep. It seemed to him that they were forcing him cruelly into a narrow sack, black and deep; and they kept crowding him down, but could not force him in. And this performance, horrible for him, was accompanied with anguish. And he was afraid, and yet wished to get in, and struggled against it, and yet tried to help.

And here suddenly he broke through, and fell .... and awoke.

There was Gerasim still sitting at his feet on the bed, dozing peacefully, patiently.

But he was lying there with his emaciated legs in stockings resting on his shoulders, the same candle with its shade, and the same never ending pain.

"Go away, Gerasim," he whispered.

"It 's nothing; I will sit here a little while."

"No, go away."

He took down his legs, lay on his side on his arm, and began to pity himself. He waited only until Gerasim had gone into the next room, and then he no longer tried to control himself, but wept like a child. He wept over his helplessness, over his terrible loneliness, over the cruelty of men, over the cruelty of God, over the absence of God.

"Why hast Thou done this? Why didst Thou place me here? Why, why dost Thou torture me so horribly?"

He expected no reply; and he wept because there was none, and could be none. The pain seized him again; but he did not stir, did not call. He said to himself: —

"There, now, again, now strike! But why? What have I done to Thee? Why is it?"

Then he became silent; ceased not only to weep, ceased to breathe, and became all attention: as it were, he heard, not a voice speaking with sounds, but the voice of his soul, the tide of his thoughts, arising in him.

"What dost thou need?" was the first clear concept possible to be expressed in words which he heard.

"'What dost thou need? What dost thou need?'" he said to himself. "What? Freedom from suffering. To live," he replied.

And again he gave his attention, with such effort that already he did not even notice his pain.

"To live? how live?" asked the voice of his soul.

"Yes, to live as I used to live — well, pleasantly."

"How didst thou live before when thou didst live well and pleasantly?" asked the voice.

And he began to call up in his imagination the best moments of his pleasant life. But, strangely enough, all these best moments of his pleasant life seemed to him absolutely different from what they had seemed then, — all, except the earliest remembrances of his childhood. There, in childhood, was something really pleasant, which would give new zest to life if it were to return. But the person who had enjoyed that pleasant

existence was no more; it was as if it were the remembrance of some one else.

As soon as the period began which had produced the present *he*, Ivan Ilyitch, all the pleasures which seemed such then, now in his eyes dwindled away, and changed into something of no account, and even disgusting.

And the farther he departed from infancy, and the nearer he came to the present, so much the more unimportant and dubious were the pleasures.

This began in the law-school. There was still something even then which was truly good; then there was gayety, there was friendship, there were hopes. But in the upper classes these good moments became rarer.

Then, in the time of his first service at the governor's, again appeared good moments; these were the recollections of love for a woman. Then all this became confused, and the happy time grew less. The nearer he came to the present, the worse it grew, and still worse and worse it grew.

"My marriage .... so unexpected, and disillusionment and my wife's breath, and sensuality, hypocrisy! And this dead service, and these labors for money; and thus one year, and two, and ten, and twenty,— and always the same thing. And the longer it went, the more dead it became.

"It is as if all the time I were going down the mountain, while thinking that I was climbing it. So it was. According to public opinion, I was climbing the mountain; and all the time my life was gliding away from under my feet. .... And here it is already .... die!

"What is this? Why? It cannot be! It cannot be that life has been so irrational, so disgusting. But even if it is so disgusting and irrational, still, why die, and die in such agony? There is no reason.

"Can it be that I did not live as I ought?" suddenly came into his head. "But how can that be, when I have done all that it was my duty to do?" he asked himself. And immediately he put away this sole explana-

tion of the enigma of life and death as something absolutely impossible.

"What dost thou wish now? — To live? To live how? To live as thou livest in court when the usher[1] proclaims, 'The court is coming! the court is coming'?[2]

"The court is coming — the court," he repeated to himself. "Here it is, the court. Yes; but I am not guilty," he cried with indignation. "What for?"

And he ceased to weep; and, turning his face to the wall, he began to think about that one thing, and that alone. "Why, wherefore, all this horror?"

But, in spite of all his thoughts, he received no answer. And when the thought occurred to him, as it had often occurred to him, that all this came from the fact that he had not lived as he should, he instantly remembered all the correctness of his life, and he drove away this strange thought.

CHAPTER X

THUS two weeks longer passed. Ivan Ilyitch no longer got up from the divan. He did not wish to lie in bed, and he lay on the divan. And, lying almost all the time with his face to the wall, he still suffered in solitude the same inexplicable sufferings, and still thought in solitude the same inexplicable thought.

"What is this? Is it true that this is death?"

And an inward voice responded: —

"Yes, it is true."

"Why these torments?"

And the voice responded: —

"But it is so. There is no why."

Farther and beyond this, there was nothing.

From the very beginning of his malady, from the time when Ivan Ilyitch for the first time went to the doctor, his life was divided into two conflicting tendencies, alternately succeeding each other. Now it was

[1] *Sudyebnui pristaf.*

[2] *Sud idyot,* — a preliminary proclamation, like our *oyes.*

despair, and the expectation of an incomprehensible and frightful death; now it was hope, and the observation of the functional activity of his body, so full of interest for him. Now before his eyes was the kidney, or the intestine, which, for the time being, failed to fulfil its duty. Then it was that incomprehensible, horrible death, from which it was impossible for any one to escape.

These two mental states, from the very beginning of his illness, kept alternating with one another. But the farther the illness progressed, the more dubious and fantastical became his ideas about the kidney, and the more real his consciousness of approaching death.

He had but to call to mind what he had been three months before, and what he was now, to call to mind with what regularity he had been descending the mountain; and that was sufficient for all possibility of hope to be dispelled.

During the last period of this solitude through which he was passing, as he lay with his face turned to the back of the divan, — a solitude amid a populous city, and amid his numerous circle of friends and family, — a solitude deeper than which could not be found anywhere, either in the depths of the sea, or in the earth, — during the last period of this terrible solitude, Ivan Ilyitch lived only by imagination in the past.

One after another, the pictures of his past life arose before him. They always began with the time nearest to the present, and went back to the very remotest, — to his childhood, and there they rested.

If Ivan Ilyitch remembered the stewed prunes which they had given him to eat that very day, then he remembered the raw, puckery French prunes of his childhood, their peculiar taste, and the abundant flow of saliva caused by the stone. And in connection with these recollections of taste, started a whole series of recollections of that time, — his nurse, his brother, his toys.

"I must not think about these things; it is too painful," said Ivan Ilyitch to himself. And again he

transported himself to the present, — the button on the back of the divan, and the wrinkles of the morocco. "Morocco is costly, not durable. There was a quarrel about it. But there was some other morocco, and some other quarrel, when we tore father's portfolio and got punished, and mamma brought us some tarts."[1]

And again his thoughts reverted to childhood; and again it was painful to Ivan Ilyitch, and he tried to avoid it, and think of something else.

And again, together with this current of recollections, there passed through his mind another current of recollections about the progress and rise of his disease. Here, also, according as he went back, there was more and more of life. There was more, also, of excellence in life, and more of life itself. And the two were confounded.

"Just as this agony goes from worse to worse, so also all my life has gone from worse to worse," he thought. "One shining point, there back in the distance, at the beginning of life; and then all growing blacker and blacker, swifter and swifter, in inverse proportion to the square of the distance from death," thought Ivan Ilyitch.

And the comparison of a stone falling with accelerating rapidity occurred to his mind. Life, a series of increasing tortures, always speeding swifter and swifter to the end, — the most horrible torture.

"I am falling."....

He shuddered, he tossed, he wished to resist it. But he already knew that it was impossible to resist; and again, with eyes weary of looking, but still not able to resist looking at what was before him, he stared at the back of the divan, and waited, waited for this frightful fall, shock, and destruction.

"It is impossible to resist," he said to himself. "But can I not know the wherefore of it? Even that is impossible. It might be explained by saying that I had not lived as I ought. But it is impossible to acknowl-

[1] *Pirozhki.*

edge that," he said to himself, recollecting all the legality, the uprightness, the propriety of his life.

"It is impossible to admit that," he said to himself, with a smile on his lips, as if some one were to see that smile of his, and be deceived by it.

"No explanation! torture, death.... why?"

CHAPTER XI

Thus passed two weeks. In these weeks, there occurred an event desired by Ivan Ilyitch and his wife. Petrishchef made a formal proposal. This took place in the evening. On the next day, Praskovia Feodorovna went to her husband, meditating in what way to explain to him Feodor Petrovitch's proposition; but that very same night, a change for the worse had taken place in Ivan Ilyitch's condition. Praskovia Feodorovna found him on the same divan, but in a new position. He was lying on his back; he was groaning, and looking straight up with a fixed stare.

She began to speak about medicines. He turned his eyes on her. She did not finish saying what she had begun, so great was the hatred against her expressed in that look.

"For Christ's sake, let me die in peace!" said he.

She was about to go out; but just at this instant the daughter came in, and came near to wish him good-morning. He looked at his daughter as he had looked at his wife, and, in reply to her questions about his health, told her dryly that he would quickly relieve them all of his presence. Neither mother nor daughter said anything more; but they sat for a few moments longer, and then went out.

"What are we to blame for?" said Liza to her mother. "As if we had made him so! I am sorry for papa, but why should he torment us?"

At the usual time the doctor came. Ivan Ilyitch answered "yes," "no," not taking his angry eyes from him; and at last he said: —

"Now see here, you know that you don't help any, so leave me!"

"We can appease your sufferings," said the doctor.

"You cannot even do that; leave me!"

The doctor went into the drawing-room, and advised Praskovia Feodorovna that it was very serious, and that there was only one means — opium — of appeasing his sufferings, which must be terrible.

The doctor said that his physical sufferings were terrible, and this was true; but more terrible than his physical sufferings were his moral sufferings, and in this was his chief torment.

His moral sufferings consisted in the fact that that very night, as he looked at Gerasim's sleepy, good-natured face, with its high cheek-bones, it had suddenly come into his head: —

"But how is it if in reality my whole life, my conscious life, has been wrong?"

It came into his head that what had shortly before presented itself to him as an absolute impossibility — that he had not lived his life as he ought — might be true. It came into his head that the scarcely recognizable desires to struggle against what men highest in position considered good, — desires scarcely recognizable, which he had immediately banished, — might be true, and all the rest might be wrong. And his service, and his course of life, and his family, and these interests of society and office — all this might be wrong.

He endeavored to defend all this before himself. And suddenly he realized all the weakness of what he was defending. And there was nothing to defend.

"But if this is so," he said to himself, "and I am departing from life with the consciousness that I have wasted all that was given me, and that it is impossible to rectify it, what then?"

He lay flat on his back, and began entirely anew to examine his whole life.

When in the morning he saw the lackey, then his wife, then his daughter, then the doctor, each one of their motions, each one of their words, confirmed for him the

terrible truth which had been disclosed to him that night. He saw in them himself, all that for which he had lived; and he saw clearly that all this was wrong, all this was a terrible, monstrous lie, concealing both life and death.

This consciousness increased his physical sufferings, added tenfold to them. He groaned and tossed, and threw off the clothes. It seemed to him that they choked him, and loaded him down.

And that was why he detested them.

They gave him a great dose of opium; he became unconscious, but at dinner-time the same thing began again. He drove them from him, and threw himself from place to place.

His wife came to him, and said: —

"Jean, darling,[1] do this for me (*for me!*). It cannot do any harm, and sometimes it helps. Why, it is a mere nothing. And often well people try it."

He opened his eyes wide.

"What? Take the sacrament? Why? It's not necessary. But, however...."

She burst into tears.

"Will you, my dear? I will get our priest. He is so sweet!"

"Excellent! very good," he continued.

When the priest came, and confessed him, he became calmer, felt, as it were, an alleviation of his doubts, and consequently of his sufferings; and there came a moment of hope. He again began to think about the blind intestine and the possibility of curing it. He took the sacrament with tears in his eyes.

When they put him to bed after the sacrament, he felt comfortable for the moment, and once more hope of life appeared. He began to think of the operation which they had proposed.

"I want to live, to live," he said to himself.

His wife came to congratulate him. She said the customary words, and added: —

"You feel better, don't you?"

Without looking at her, he said: —

[1] *Galubchik;* literally, little pigeon.

"Yes."

Her hope, her temperament, the expression of her face, the sound of her voice, all said to him one thing: —

"Wrong! all that for which thou hast lived, and thou livest, is falsehood, deception, hiding from thee life and death."

And as soon as he expressed this thought, his exasperation returned, and, together with his exasperation, the physical, tormenting agony; and, with the agony, the consciousness of inevitable death close at hand. Something new took place: a screw seemed to turn in him, twinging pain to show through him, and his breathing was constricted.

The expression of his face, when he said "yes," was terrible. After he had said that "yes," he looked straight into her face, and then, with extraordinary quickness for one so weak, he threw himself on his face and cried: —

"Go away! go away! leave me!"

CHAPTER XII

From that moment began that shriek that did not cease for three days, and was so terrible that, when it was heard two rooms away, it was impossible to hear it without terror. At the moment that he answered his wife, he felt that he was lost, and there was no return, that the end had come, absolutely the end, and the question was not settled, but remained a question.

"U! uu! u!" he cried in varying intonations. He began to shriek, "*N'ye khotchu* — I won't;" and thus he kept up the cry on the letter *u*.

Three whole days, during which for him there was no time, he struggled in that black sack into which an invisible, invincible power was thrusting him. He fought as one condemned to death fights in the hands of the hangman, knowing that he cannot save himself, and at every moment he felt that, notwithstanding all the violence of his struggle, he was nearer and nearer to that which terrified him. He felt that his suffering con

sisted, both in the fact that he was being thrust into that black hole, and still more that he could not make his way through into it. What hindered him from making his way through was the confession that his life had been good. This justification of his life caught him, and did not let him advance, and more than all else tormented him.

Suddenly some force knocked him in the breast, in the side, still more forcibly compressed his breath; he was hurled through the hole, and there at the bottom of the hole some light seemed to shine on him. It happened to him as it sometimes does on a railway carriage when you think that you are going forward, but are really going backward, and suddenly recognize the true direction.

"Yes, all was wrong," he said to himself; "but that is nothing. I might, I might have done right. What is right?" he asked himself, and suddenly stopped.

This was at the end of the third day, two hours before his death. At this very same time the little student noiselessly stole into his father's room, and approached his bed. The moribund was continually shrieking desperately, and tossing his arms. His hand struck upon the little student's head. The little student seized it, pressed it to his lips, and burst into tears.

It was at this very same time that Ivan Ilyitch fell through, saw the light, and it was revealed to him that his life had not been as it ought, but that still it was possible to repair it. He was just asking himself, "What is right?" and stopped to listen.

Then he felt that some one was kissing his hand. He opened his eyes, and looked at his son. He felt sorry for him. His wife came to him. He looked at her. With open mouth, and with her nose and cheeks wet with tears, with an expression of despair, she was looking at him. He felt sorry for her.

"Yes, I am a torment to them," he thought. "I am sorry for them, but they will be better off when I am dead."

He wanted to express this, but he had not the strength to say it.

"However, why should I say it? I must do it."

He pointed out his son to his wife by a glance, and said:—

"Take him away .... I am sorry .... and for thee."

He wanted to say also, "*Prosti*— Forgive," but he said, "*Propusti*— Let it pass;" and, not having the strength to correct himself, he waved his hand, knowing that he would comprehend who had the right.

And suddenly it became clear to him that what oppressed him, and was hidden from him, suddenly was lighted up for him all at once, and on two sides, on ten sides, on all sides.

He felt sorry for them; he felt that he must do something to make it less painful for them. To free them, and free himself, from these torments, "How good and how simple!" he thought.

"But the pain," he asked himself, "where is it?— Here, now, where art thou, pain?"

He began to listen.

"Yes, here it is! Well, then, do your worst, pain!"

"And death? where is it?"

He tried to find his former customary fear of death, and could not.

"Where is death? What is it?"

There was no fear, because there was no death.

In place of death was light!

"Here is something like!" he suddenly said aloud. "What joy!"

For him all this passed in a single instant, and the significance of this instant did not change.

For those who stood by his side, his death-agony was prolonged two hours more. In his breast something bubbled up, his emaciated body shuddered. Then more and more rarely came the bubbling and the rattling.

"It is all over," said some one above him.

He heard these words, and repeated them in his soul.

"It is over! death!" he said to himself. "It does not exist more."

He drew in one more breath, stopped in the midst of it, stretched himself, and died.

THREE DEATHS

A TALE

(1859)

CHAPTER I

IT was autumn.

Along the highway came two equipages at a brisk pace. In the first carriage sat two women. One was a lady, thin and pale; the other, her maid, with a brilliant red complexion, and plump. Her short, dry locks escaped from under a faded cap; her red hand, in a torn glove, put them back with a jerk. Her full bosom, incased in a tapestry shawl, breathed of health; her keen black eyes now gazed through the window at the fields hurrying by them, now rested on her mistress, now peered solicitously into the corners of the coach.

Before the maid's face swung the lady's bonnet on the rack; on her knees lay a puppy; her feet were raised by packages lying on the floor, and could almost be heard drumming upon them above the noise of the creaking of the springs and the rattling of the windows.

The lady, with her hands resting in her lap and her eyes shut, feebly swayed on the cushions which supported her back, and, slightly frowning, tried to suppress her cough.

She wore a white nightcap, and a blue neckerchief twisted around her delicate pale neck. A straight line, disappearing under the cap, parted her perfectly smooth blond hair, which was pomaded; and there was a dry, deathly appearance about the whiteness of the skin, in this wide parting. The withered and rather sallow skin

was loosely drawn over her delicate and pretty features, and there was a hectic flush on the cheeks and cheek-bones. Her lips were dry and restless, her thin eye-lashes had lost their curve, and a cloth traveling capote made straight folds over her sunken chest. Although her eyes were closed, her face gave the impression of weariness, irascibility, and habitual suffering.

The lackey, leaning back, was napping on the coach-box. The *yamshchik*, or hired driver, shouting in a clear voice, urged on his four powerful and sweaty horses, occasionally looking back at the other driver, who was shouting just behind them in an open barouche. The tires of the wheels, in their even and rapid course, left wide parallel tracks on the limy mud of the highway.

The sky was gray and cold, a moist mist was falling over the fields and the road. It was suffocating in the carriage, and smelt of eau-de-Cologne and dust. The invalid leaned back her head, and slowly opened her eyes. Her great eyes were brilliant, and of a beautiful dark color.

"Again!" said she, nervously, pushing away with her beautiful attenuated hand the end of her maid's cloak, which occasionally hit against her leg. Her mouth contracted painfully.

Matriosha raised her cloak in both hands, lifting herself up on her strong legs, and then sat down again, farther away. Her fresh face was suffused with a brilliant scarlet.

The invalid's beautiful dark eyes eagerly followed the maid's motions; and then with both hands she took hold of the seat, and did her best to raise herself a little higher, but her strength was not sufficient.

Again her mouth became contracted, and her whole face took on an expression of unavailing, angry irony.

"If you would only help me.... ah! It's not necessary. I can do it myself. Only have the goodness not to put those pillows behind me..... On the whole, you had better not touch them, if you don't understand!"

The lady closed her eyes, and then again, quickly raising the lids, gazed at her maid.

Matriosha looked at her, and gnawed her red lower lip. A heavy sigh escaped from the sick woman's breast; but the sigh was not ended, but was merged in a fit of coughing. She scowled, and turned her face away, clutching her chest with both hands. When the coughing fit was over, she once more shut her eyes, and continued to sit motionless. The coach and the barouche rolled into a village. Matriosha drew her fat hand from under her shawl, and made the sign of the cross.

"What is this?" demanded the lady.

"A post-station, madame." [1]

"Why did you cross yourself, I should like to know?"

"The church, madame."

The invalid lady looked out of the window, and began slowly to cross herself, gazing with all her eyes at the great village church, in front of which her carriage was now passing.

The two vehicles came to a stop together at the post-house. The sick woman's husband and the doctor dismounted from the barouche, and came to the coach.

"How are you feeling?" asked the doctor, taking her pulse.

"Well, my dear, aren't you fatigued?" asked the husband, in French. "Wouldn't you like to get out?"

Matriosha, gathering up the bundles, squeezed herself into the corner, so as not to interfere with the conversation.

"No matter, it's all the same thing," replied the invalid. "I will not get out."

The husband, after standing there a little, went into the post-house. Matriosha, jumping from the coach, tiptoed across the muddy road into the inclosure.

"If I am miserable, there is no reason why the rest of you should not have breakfast," said the sick woman, smiling faintly to the doctor, who was standing by her window.

"It makes no difference to them how I am," she re-

[1] *Sudaruinya.*

marked to herself as the doctor, turning from her with slow step, started to run up the steps of the station-house. "They are well, and it's all the same to them. O my God!"

"How now, Edouard Ivanovitch?" said the husband, as he met the doctor, and rubbing his hands with a gay smile. "I have ordered my traveling-case brought; what do you say to that?"

"That's worth while," replied the doctor.

"Well, now, how about *her?*" asked the husband, with a sigh, lowering his voice and raising his brows.

"I have told you that she cannot reach Moscow, much less Italy, especially in such weather."

"What is to be done, then? Oh! my God! my God!"

The husband covered his eyes with his hand. .... "Give it here," he added, addressing his man, who came bringing the traveling-case.

"You'll have to stop somewhere on the route," replied the doctor, shrugging his shoulders.

"But tell me, what can I do?" rejoined the husband. "I have employed every argument to keep her from going; I have spoken to her of our means, and of our children whom we should have to leave behind, and of my business. She would not hear a word. She has made her plans for living abroad, as if she were well. But if I should tell her what her real condition is, it would kill her."

"Well, she is a dead woman now; you may as well know it, Vasili Dmitritch. A person cannot live without lungs, and there is no way of making lungs grow again. It is melancholy, it is hard, but what is to be done about it? It is my business and yours to make her last days as easy as possible. The confessor is the person needed here."

"Oh, my God! Now just perceive how I am situated, in speaking to her of her last will. Let come whatever may, yet I cannot speak of that. And yet you know how good she is."

"Try at least to persuade her to wait until the

roads are frozen," said the doctor, shaking his head significantly; "something might happen during the journey." ....

"Aksiusha, oh, Aksiusha!" cried the superintendent's daughter, throwing a cloak over her head, and tiptoeing down the muddy back steps. "Come along. Let us have a look at the Shirkinskaya lady; they say she 's got lung trouble, and they 're taking her abroad. I never saw how any one looked in consumption."

Aksiusha jumped down from the door-sill; and the two girls, hand in hand, hurried out of the gates. Shortening their steps, they walked by the coach, and stared in at the lowered window. The invalid bent her head toward them; but, when she saw their inquisitiveness, she frowned and turned away.

"Oh, de-e-ar!"[1] said the superintendent's daughter, vigorously shaking her head. .... "How wonderfully pretty she used to be, and how she has changed! It is terrible! Did you see? Did you see, Aksiusha?"

"Yes, and how thin she is!" assented Aksiusha. "Let us go by and look again; we 'll make believe go to the well. Did you see, she turned away from us; still I got a good view of her. Isn't it too bad, Masha?"

"Yes, but what terrible mud!" replied Masha, and both of them started to run back within the gates.

"It 's evident that I have become a fright," thought the sick woman. .... "But we must hurry, hurry, and get abroad, and there I shall soon get well."

"Well, and how are you, my dear?" inquired the husband, coming to the coach with still a morsel of something in his mouth.

"Always one and the same question," thought the sick woman, "and he 's even eating!"

"It 's no consequence," she murmured, between her teeth.

"Do you know, my dear, I am afraid that this journey in such weather will only make you worse. Edouard

[1] *Mm-a-tushki*, literally, little mothers.

Ivanovitch says the same thing. Had n't we better turn back?"

She maintained an angry silence.

"Maybe the weather will improve, the roads will become good, and that would be better for you; then at least we could start all together."

"Pardon me. If I had not listened to you so long, I should at this moment be at Berlin and have entirely recovered."

"What 's to be done, my angel? it was impossible, as you know. But now if you would wait a month, you would be ever so much better; I could finish up my business, and we could take the children with us." ....

"The children are well, and I am not."

"But just see here, my love, if in this weather you should grow worse on the road .... At least we should be at home."

"What is the use of being at home? .... *Die* at home?" replied the invalid, peevishly.

But the word *die* evidently startled her, and she turned on her husband a supplicating and inquiring look. He dropped his eyes, and said nothing.

The sick woman's mouth suddenly contracted in a childish fashion, and the tears sprang to her eyes. Her husband covered his face with his handkerchief, and silently turned from the coach.

"No, I will go," cried the invalid; and, lifting her eyes to the sky, she clasped her hands, and began to whisper incoherent words. "My God! why must it be?" she said, and the tears flowed more violently.

She prayed long and fervently, but still there was just the same sense of constriction and pain in her chest, just the same gray melancholy in the sky and the fields and the road; just the same autumnal mist, neither thicker nor more tenuous, but ever the same in its monotony, falling on the muddy highway, on the roofs, on the carriage, and on the sheepskin coats of the drivers, who were talking in strong, gay voices, as they were oiling and adjusting the carriage.

* * * * * *

CHAPTER II

THE coach was ready, but the driver loitered. He had gone into the drivers' room.[1] In the izba it was warm, close, dark, and suffocating, smelling of human occupation, of cooking bread, of cabbage, and of sheepskin garments.

Several drivers were in the room; the cook was engaged near the oven, on top of which lay a sick man wrapped up in his sheepskins.

"Uncle Khveodor! hey! Uncle Khveodor," called a young man, the driver, in a tulup, and with his knout in his belt, coming into the room, and addressing the sick man.

"What do you want, rattlepate? What are you calling to Fyèdka[2] for?" asked one of the drivers. "There's your carriage waiting for you."

"I want to borrow his boots. Mine are worn out," replied the young fellow, tossing back his curls and straightening his mittens in his belt. "Why? is he asleep? Say, Uncle Khveodor!" he insisted, going to the oven.

"What is it?" a weak voice was heard saying, and an emaciated face was lifted up from the oven.

A broad, gaunt hand, bloodless and covered with hairs, pulled up his overcoat over the dirty shirt that covered his bony shoulder. "Give me something to drink, brother; what is it you want?"

The young fellow handed him a small dish of water.

"I say, Fyedya," said he, hesitating, "I reckon you won't want your new boots now; let me have them? Probably you won't need them any more."

The sick man, dropping his weary head down to the lacquered bowl, and dipping his thin, hanging mustache in the brown water, drank feebly and eagerly.

His tangled beard was unclean; his sunken, clouded

[1] *Izba.*

[2] Fyedka and Fyedya are diminutives of Feodor (Theodore), mispronounced by the yamshchik.

eyes were with difficulty raised to the young man's face. When he had finished drinking, he tried to raise his hand to wipe his wet lips, but his strength failed him, and he wiped them on the sleeve of his overcoat. Silently, and breathing with difficulty through his nose, he looked straight into the young man's eyes, and tried to collect his strength.

"Maybe you have promised them to some one else?" said the young driver. "If that's so, all right. The worst of it is, it is wet outside, and I have to go out to my work, and so I said to myself, 'I reckon I'll ask Fyedka for his boots; I reckon he won't be needing them.' But maybe you will need them,—just say." ....

Something began to bubble up and rumble in the sick man's chest; he bent over, and began to strangle, with a cough that rattled in his throat.

"Now I should like to know where he would need them?" unexpectedly snapped out the cook, angrily addressing the whole hovel. "This is the second month that he has not crept down from the oven. Just see how he is all broken up! and you can hear how it must hurt him inside. Where would he need boots? They would not think of burying him in new ones! And it was time long ago, God pardon me the sin of saying so. Just see how he chokes! He ought to be taken from this room to another, or somewhere. They say there's hospitals in the city; but what's you going to do? he takes up the whole room, and that's too much. There is n't any room at all. And yet you are expected to keep neat."

"Hey! Seryoha, come along, take your place, the people are waiting," cried the head man of the station, coming to the door.

Seryoha started to go without waiting for his reply, but the sick man during his cough intimated by his eyes that he was going to speak.

"You take the boots, Seryoha," said he, conquering the cough, and getting his breath a little. "Only, do you hear, buy me a stone when I am dead," he added hoarsely.

"Thank you, uncle; then I will take them, and as for the stone, — yei-yei! — I will buy you one."

"There, children, you are witnesses," the sick man was able to articulate, and then once more he bent over and began to choke.

"All right, we have heard," said one of the drivers. "But run, Seryoha, or else the starosta will be after you again. You know Lady Shirkinskaya is sick."

Seryoha quickly pulled off his ragged, unwieldy boots, and flung them under the bench. Uncle Feodor's new ones fitted his feet exactly, and the young driver could not keep his eyes off them as he went to the carriage.

"Ek! what splendid boots! Here's some grease," called another driver with the grease-pot in his hand, as Seryoha mounted to his box and gathered up the reins. "Get them for nothing?"

"So you're jealous, are you?" cried Seryoha, lifting up and tucking around his legs the tails of his overcoat. "Off with you, my darlings," he cried to the horses, cracking his knout; and the coach and barouche, with their occupants, trunks, and other belongings, were hidden in the thick autumnal mist, and rapidly whirled away over the wet road.

The sick driver remained on the oven in the stifling hovel, and, not being able to throw off the phlegm, by a supreme effort turned over on the other side, and stopped coughing.

Till evening there was a continual coming and going, and eating of meals in the room, and the sick man was not noticed. Before night came on, the cook climbed up on the oven, and got the sheepskin coat from the farther side of his legs.

"Don't be angry with me, Nastasya," exclaimed the sick man. "I shall soon leave your room."

"All right, all right, it's of no consequence," muttered the woman. "But what is the matter with you, uncle? Tell me."

"All my inwards are gnawed out. God knows what it is!"

"And I don't doubt your gullet hurts you when you cough so!"

"It hurts me all over. My death is at hand, that's what it is. Okh! okh! okh!" groaned the sick man.

"Now cover up your legs this way," said Nastasya, comfortably arranging the overcoat so that it would cover him, and then getting down from the oven.

During the night the room was faintly lighted by a single taper. Nastasya and a dozen drivers were sleeping, snoring loudly, on the floor and the benches. Only the sick man feebly hawked and coughed, and tossed on the oven.

In the morning no sound was heard from him.

"I saw something wonderful in my sleep," said the cook, as she stretched herself in the early twilight the next morning. "I seemed to see Uncle Khveodor get down from the oven, and go out to cut wood. 'Look here,' says he, 'I'm going to help you, Nastya;' and I says to him, 'How can you split wood?' but he seizes the hatchet, and begins to cut so fast, so fast that nothing but chips fly. 'Why,' says I, 'have n't you been sick?'—'No,' says he, 'I am well,' and he kind of lifted up the ax, and I was scared; and I screamed and woke up. He can't be dead, can he?—Uncle Khveodor! hey, uncle!"

Feodor did not move.

"Now he can't be dead, can he? Go and see," said one of the drivers, who had just waked up.

The emaciated hand, covered with reddish hair, that hung down from the oven, was cold and pale.

"Go tell the superintendent; it seems he is dead," said the driver.

Feodor had no relatives. He was a stranger. On the next day they buried him in the new burying-ground behin l the grove; and Nastasya for many days had to tell everybody of the vision which she had seen, and how she had been the first to discover that Uncle Feodor was dead.

CHAPTER III

SPRING had come.

Along the wet streets of the city swift streamlets ran purling between heaps of dung-covered ice; bright were the colors of people's dresses and the tones of their voices, as they hurried along. In the walled gardens, the buds on the trees were burgeoning, and the fresh breeze swayed their branches with a soft gentle murmur. Everywhere transparent drops were forming and falling. ....

The sparrows chattered incoherently, and fluttered about on their little wings. On the sunny side, on the walls, houses, and trees, all was full of life and brilliancy. The sky, and the earth, and the heart of man overflowed with youth and joy.

In front of a great seignorial mansion, in one of the principal streets, fresh straw had been laid down; in the house lay that same moribund invalid whom we saw hastening abroad.

Near the closed doors of her room stood the sick lady's husband, and a lady well along in years. On a divan sat the confessor, with cast-down eyes, holding something wrapped up under his stole.[1] In one corner, in a Voltaire easy-chair, reclined an old lady, the sick woman's mother, weeping violently.

Near her stood the maid, holding a clean handkerchief, ready for the old lady's use when she should ask for it. Another maid was rubbing the old lady's temples, and blowing on her gray head underneath her cap.

"Well, Christ be with you, my dear," said the husband to the elderly lady who was standing with him near the door: "she has such confidence in you; you know how to talk with her; go and speak with her a little while, my darling,[2] please go!"

He was about to open the door for her; but his cousin held him back, putting her handkerchief several times to her eyes, and shaking her head.

[1] Called *epitrachilion* in the Greek Church. [2] *Galubushka*, little dove.

"There, now she will not see that I have been weeping," said she, and, opening the door herself, went to the invalid.

The husband was in the greatest excitement, and seemed quite beside himself. He started to go over to the old mother, but, after taking a few steps, he turned around, walked the length of the room, and approached the priest.

The priest looked at him, raised his brows toward heaven, and sighed. The thick gray beard also was lifted and fell again.

"My God! my God!" said the husband.

"What can you do?" exclaimed the confessor, sighing and again lifting up his brows and beard, and letting them drop.

"And the old mother there!" exclaimed the husband, almost in despair. "She will not be able to endure it. You see, she loved her so, she loved her so, that she.... I don't know. You might try, father,[1] to calm her a little, and persuade her to go away."

The confessor arose and went over to the old lady.

"It is true, no one can appreciate a mother's heart," said he, "but God is compassionate."

The old lady's face was suddenly convulsed, and a hysterical sob shook her frame.

"God is compassionate," repeated the priest, when she had grown a little calmer. "I will tell you, in my parish there was a sick man, and much worse than Marya Dmitrievna, and he, though he was only a shopkeeper,[2] was cured in a very short time, by means of herbs. And this very same shopkeeper is now in Moscow. I have told Vasili Dmitrievitch about him; it might be tried, you know. At all events, it would satisfy the invalid. With God, all things are possible."

"No, she won't get well," persisted the old lady. "Why should God have taken her, and not me?"

And again the hysterical sobbing overcame her, so violently that she fainted away.

[1] *Batyushka.*
[2] *Meshchanin;* French, *bourgeois.*

The invalid's husband hid his face in his hands, and rushed from the room.

In the corridor the first person whom he met was a six-year-old boy, who was chasing his little sister with all his might and main.

"Do you bid me take the children to their mamasha?" inquired the nurse.

"No, she does not like to see them. They distract her."

The lad stopped for a moment, and, after looking eagerly into his father's face, he cut a dido with his leg, and with merry shouts ran on.

"I 'm playing she 's a horse, papasha," cried the little fellow, pointing to his sister.

Meantime, in the next room, the cousin had taken her seat near the sick woman, and was skilfully bringing the conversation by degrees round so as to prepare her for the thought of death. The doctor stood by the window, mixing some draught.

The invalid, in a white capote, all surrounded by cushions, was sitting up in bed, and gazed silently at her cousin.

"Ah, my dear!" she exclaimed, unexpectedly interrupting her, "don't try to prepare me; don't treat me like a little child! I am a Christian woman. I know all about it. I know that I have not long to live; I know that if my husband had heeded me sooner, I should have been in Italy, and possibly, yes probably, should have been well by this time. They all told him so. But what is to be done? it's as God saw fit. We all of us have sinned, I know that; but I hope in the mercy of God, that all will be pardoned, ought to be pardoned. I am trying to sound my own heart. I also have committed many sins, my love. But how much I have suffered in atonement! I have tried to bear my sufferings patiently." ....

"Then shall I have the confessor come in, my love? It will be all the easier for you, after you have been absolved," said the cousin.

The sick woman dropped her head in token of assent. "O God! pardon me, a sinner," she whispered.

The cousin went out, and beckoned to the confessor. "She is an angel," she said to the husband, with tears in her eyes. The husband wept. The priest went into the sick-room; the old lady still remained unconscious, and in the room beyond all was perfectly quiet. At the end of five minutes the confessor came out, and, taking off his stole, arranged his hair.

"Thanks be to the Lord, she is calmer now," said he. "She wishes to see you."

The cousin and the husband went to the sick-room. The invalid, gently weeping, was gazing at the images.

"I congratulate you, my love," said the husband.

"Thank you. How well I feel now! what ineffable joy I experience!" said the sick woman, and a faint smile played over her thin lips. "How merciful God is! Is He not? He is merciful and omnipotent!"

And again with an eager prayer she turned her tearful eyes toward the holy images.

Then suddenly something seemed to occur to her mind. She beckoned to her husband.

"You are never willing to do what I desire," said she, in a weak and querulous voice.

The husband, stretching his neck, listened to her submissively.

"What is it, my love?"

"How many times I have told you that these doctors don't know anything! There are simple women doctors; they make cures. That's what the good father said. .... A shopkeeper .... send for him." ....

"For whom, my love?"

"Good heavens! you can never understand me." And the dying woman frowned, and closed her eyes.

The doctor came to her, and took her hand. Her pulse was evidently growing feebler and feebler. He made a sign to the husband. The sick woman remarked this gesture, and looked around in fright. The cousin turned away to hide her tears.

"Don't weep, don't torment yourselves on my account," said the invalid. "That takes away from me my last comfort."

"You are an angel!" exclaimed the cousin, kissing her hand.

"No, kiss me here. They only kiss the hands of those who are dead. My God! my God!"

That same evening the sick woman was a corpse, and the corpse in the coffin lay in the parlor of the great mansion. In the immense room, the doors of which were closed, sat the clerk,[1] and with a monotonous voice read the Psalms of David through his nose.

The bright glare from the wax candles in the lofty silver candelabra fell on the white brow of the dead, on the heavy waxen hands, on the stiff folds of the cerement which brought out into awful relief the knees and the feet.

The clerk, not varying his tones, continued to read on steadily, and in the silence of the chamber of death his words rang out and died away. Occasionally from distant rooms came the voice of children and their romping.

"*Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.*

"*Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.*

"*The glory of the Lord shall endure forever.*"....

The face of the dead was stern and majestic. But there was no motion either on the pure cold brow, or the firmly closed lips. She was all attention! But did she perhaps now understand these majestic words?

CHAPTER IV

At the end of a month, over the grave of the dead a stone chapel was erected. Over the driver's there was as yet no stone, and only the fresh green grass sprouted over the mound which served as the sole record of the past existence of a man.

"It will be a sin and a shame, Seryoha," said the cook at the station-house one day, "if you don't buy

[1] *Diachok.*

a gravestone for Khveodor. You kept saying, 'It's winter, winter,' but now why don't you keep your word? I heard it all. He has already come back once to ask why you don't do it; if you don't buy him one, he will come again, he will choke you."

"Well, now, have I denied it?" urged Seryoha. "I am going to buy him a stone, as I said I would. I can get one for a ruble and a half. I have not forgotten about it; I'll have to get it. As soon as I happen to be in town, then I'll buy him one."

"You ought at least to put up a cross, that's what you ought to do," said an old driver. "It isn't right at all. You're wearing those boots now."

"Yes. But where could I get him a cross? You wouldn't want to make one out of an old piece of stick, would you?"

"What is that you say? Make one out of an old piece of stick? No; take your ax, go out to the wood a little earlier than usual, and you can hew him out one. Take a little ash tree, and you can make one. You can have a covered cross. If you go then, you won't have to give the watchman a little drink of vodka. One doesn't want to give vodka for every trifle. Now, yesterday I broke my axletree, and I go and hew out a new one of green wood. No one said a word."

Early the next morning, almost before dawn, Seryoha took his ax, and went to the wood.

Over all things hung a cold, dead veil of falling mist, as yet untouched by the rays of the sun.

The east gradually grew brighter, reflecting its pale light over the vault of heaven still covered by light clouds. Not a single grass-blade below, not a single leaf on the topmost branches of the tree-top, waved. Only from time to time could be heard the sounds of fluttering wings in the thicket, or a rustling on the ground broke in on the silence of the forest.

Suddenly a strange sound, foreign to this nature, resounded and died away at the edge of the forest. Again the noise sounded, and was monotonously repeated again and again, at the foot of one of the

ancient, immovable trees. A tree-top began to shake in an extraordinary manner; the juicy leaves whispered something; and the warbler, sitting on one of the branches, flew off a couple of times with a shrill cry, and, wagging its tail, finally perched on another tree.

The ax rang more and more frequently; the white chips, full of sap, were scattered upon the dewy grass, and a slight cracking was heard beneath the blows.

The tree trembled with all its body, leaned over, and quickly straightened itself, shuddering with fear on its base.

For an instant all was still, then once more the tree bent over; a crash was heard in its trunk; and, tearing the thicket, and dragging down the branches, it plunged toward the damp earth.

The noise of the ax and of footsteps ceased.

The warbler uttered a cry, and flew higher. The branch which she grazed with her wings shook for an instant, and then came to rest like all the others with their foliage.

The trees, more joyously than ever, extended their motionless branches over the new space that had been made in their midst.

The first sunbeams, breaking through the cloud, gleamed in the sky, and shone along the earth and heavens.

The mist, in billows, began to float along the hollows; the dew, gleaming, played on the green foliage; translucent white clouds hurried along their azure path.

The birds hopped about in the thicket, and, as if beside themselves, voiced their happiness; the juicy leaves joyfully and contentedly whispered on the tree-tops; and the branches of the living trees slowly and majestically waved over the dead and fallen tree.

NEGLECT A FIRE AND IT SPREADS

"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him ? till seven times ?

Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times : but, Until seventy times seven.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

The servant therefore fell down, and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

And he would not : but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant even as I had pity on thee ?

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." — MATT. xviii. 21–35.

IVAN SHCHERBAKOF, a peasant, lived in the country. He lived well. He had perfect health, he was the best laborer in the village, and he had three sons grown up: one was married, one was engaged, and the third was a lad who was just beginning to tend the

horses and plow. His old wife, Ivanova, was a clever woman, and a good housekeeper; and the daughter-in-law was peaceful and industrious. Ivan lived comfortably with his family. The only one of his household who ate the bread of idleness was his infirm old father. For six years he had been lying on the oven, suffering from asthma. Ivan had plenty of everything; he had three horses and a colt, a cow with a calf, and fifteen sheep. The women not only mended their husbands' clothes, and made them, and also worked in the field: the muzhiks worked like true peasants. The old grain held out till the new came. They paid their taxes, and supplied all their necessities, with their oat-crop. Ivan lived comfortably with his children.

But in the next dvor lived Ivan's neighbor, Gavrilo, a cripple, the son of Gordyeï Ivanof. And a quarrel arose between him and Ivan.

As long as the old Gordyeï was alive, and Ivan's father was manager, the muzhiks lived like exemplary neighbors. If the women needed a sifter or a tub, or the muzhiks needed a corn-cloth or to borrow a wheel, they would send from one yard to the other, and, like good neighbors, accommodate each other. If a calf broke into the threshing-floor, they would drive it out, and only say, "Look out, don't let him come in again; we have not moved the corn yet." But as for hiding or locking things up either at the threshing-floor or in the shed, or quarreling, such things never happened.

Thus they got along while the old folks were alive. But when the next generation took the reins, a new state of things came about.

The whole trouble arose from a trifle.

A little hen belonging to Ivan's daughter-in-law took to laying early in the season. The young wife began to collect the eggs for Easter. Every day she went after the eggs to the wagon-box that stood in the shed. But the children, it seems, scared the hen, which flew over the fence into the neighbor's yard, and there began to lay. The young woman heard the little hen cackling; she said to herself: —

"I have n't time now; I must clean up the izba against the holidays. I 'll go and get it by and by."

In the evening she went to the shed, to the wagon-box; not a sign of an egg. The young woman began to ask her mother-in-law and her brother-in-law if they had taken any out.

"No," say they, "we have n't."

But Taraska, the smallest brother-in-law, said: —

"Your bantam has been laying over in the next yard. She was cackling over there, and she came flying back from there."

And the young woman looked at her bantam; she was sitting next the cockerel on the roost; her eyes were already shut; she was just going to sleep. And she would have asked her where she had been laying, if the hen could only have answered.

And the young woman went over to her neighbor's. The old woman came to the door.

"What do you want, young woman?"

"Well," says she, "baushka,[1] my little hen flew over into your yard to-day. I wonder if she did n't lay an egg?"

"We have n't seen it at all. Our own hens, thank God, have been laying this long time. We gathered up our own, but we don't need other folks's. We, my little girl, never go into strangers' yards to collect eggs."

This was an insult to the young woman, she said a word too much; the neighbor replied in the same way, and the women began to berate each other. Ivan's wife came out after water, and she also took a hand. Gavrilo's wife rushed out of the room and began to blame her neighbor: she recalled things that had happened, and added things that had never happened. A regular cackle ensued.

All screamed at once, and tried to say two words at a time. Yes, and the words were all bad: "You are such and such," — "you are another," — "you are a thief," — "you are a trollop," — "you starve your old father-in-law," — "you are a beast."

[1] *Baushka*, for *babushka*, old woman or grandmother.

"And you, mean little beggar that you are, you made a hole in my sieve!" — "And you've got our bucket-yoke.[1] I want it back again."

They caught hold of the bucket-yoke, spilt the water, tore off each other's shawls, and began to fight.

Just here Gavrilo came in from the field, and took his wife's part. Ivan and his son rushed over, and they all fell in a heap. Ivan was a strong muzhik, and threw them all in different directions. He tore out a handful of Gavrilo's whiskers. A crowd collected, and it was hard to separate them.

That was the beginning of it.

Gavrilo wrapped up his bunch of whiskers in a piece of writing-paper, and brought suit in the district court.

"I did not grow my beard," says he, "for the sake of letting that pigheaded Vanka pull it out."

And his wife kept telling her neighbors that now they would try Ivan at court, and send him to Siberia; and so the quarrel went on.

From the very first day the old man, as he lay on the oven, tried to pacify them; but the young people would not listen to him. He said to them: —

"Children, you are acting foolishly; and the whole thing started from a piece of foolishness. Just think, the whole trouble is about an egg! Suppose the children did pick up the little egg. Why, let them have it.[2] One egg is n't worth much. God has plenty for all. Well, suppose she did say a bad word; you ought to have corrected it; you ought to have taught her to say better things. Well, you've had your fight — we are all sinners! Such things happen. Now go and make it up, and all will be forgotten! But, if you act out of spite, things will go from bad to worse for you."

The younger ones did not listen; they thought the old man was talking nonsense, and was only grumbling, as old men are apt to do.

Ivan did not give in to his neighbor.

"I did not pull out his whiskers," said he, "he pulled

[1] *Koromuislo*, the yoke which is used for carrying water.

[2] *Nu i Bog s nim;* literally, "Well, and God be with them!"

them out himself; but his son tore out all my eye-hooks, and tore the shirt off my back. Just look at it!"

And Ivan also went to court. The case was tried before the magistrate and at the district court. While they were at law, a bolt was missing from Gavrilo's cart. Gavrilo's women folk accused Ivan's son of stealing it.

"We ourselves saw him go by the window at night," they said, "on his way to the cart; and some one said he stopped at the tavern, and tried to sell the bolt to the tavern-keeper."

Another suit was begun; and at home, every day, there was a new quarrel, a new fight. The little children, imitating their elders, quarreled; and the women, when they met at the river, did not pound so much with their paddles as they clacked with their tongues, and all to no good.

At first the muzhiks only accused each other, but in course of time they actually began to steal whatever happened to be lying round. And the women and children also learned to do the same. Their lives grew constantly worse and worse.

Ivan Shcherbakof and Gavrilo the cripple had their cases tried before the commune, and in the district court, and before the arbiter of the peace, until all the judges were weary of it; Gavrilo would have Ivan fined and put into jail, or Ivan would do the same to Gavrilo. And the more harm they did to each other the angrier they became. When dogs get to fighting, the more they tear each other, the more desperate they become. If some one pounds the dog from behind, he thinks it is the other dog that is biting, and grows madder still. So it was with these muzhiks. They went ahead with their lawsuits: either one or the other would get punished by fine or arrest; and for all that, their hearts were filled with still greater hatred.

"Just wait! I'll get even with you yet!"

Thus their affairs dragged on for six years. Still the old man on the oven kept saying the same thing. He used to try to reason with them: —

"What are you doing, children? Drop all these

doings; don't neglect your business, and don't bear malice; it will be much better. For the angrier you get, the worse it becomes."

Still they paid no attention to the old man.

On the seventh year it came to pass that, at a wedding, Ivan's daughter-in-law insulted Gavrilo in the presence of the people. She began to accuse him of horse-stealing. Gavrilo was drunk; he could not control his temper, and he struck the woman; he hit her so hard that she was confined to her bed for a whole week; but she was in a delicate condition. Ivan was glad of the occurrence, and he went for a warrant at the magistrate's. ....

"Now," said he to himself, "I shall square accounts with my neighbor; he shall not escape prison or Siberia."

But again Ivan lost his case. The magistrate did not accept his petition; the woman was examined; when she got up, there were no marks at all on her. Ivan went to the arbiter of the peace, and the latter transferred the case to the district court. Ivan began to bother the volost;[1] he drank up two or three gallons of mead with the secretary and the elder, and he succeeded in having Gavrilo sentenced to be whipped. They read the sentence to Gavrilo in court. The secretary read it: —

"The court has decided that the peasant Gavrilo Gordyeyef be punished with twenty lashes in presence of the officers of the volost."

Ivan also listened to the sentence, and looked at Gavrilo: "Now, what will he do about it?" Gavrilo listened to it, turned as white as a sheet, turned around, and went out into the vestibule. Ivan followed him and started to go to his horse; but he heard Gavrilo saying: —

"All right," says he; "he will lash my back; it will burn; but something of his may burn worse."

Ivan heard these words, and immediately turned to the judges.

[1] The *volost* is a district comprising several villages, of which the head man is called *starshina*.

"Just judges! he has threatened to set my house on fire! Listen: he said it in the presence of witnesses!"

Gavrilo was called back.

"Is it true you said so?"

"I said nothing. Lash me, since you have the power. It seems that I am the only one to suffer, though I am right; but he's allowed to do anything."

Gavrilo wanted to say more, but his lips and cheeks began to tremble. And he turned his face to the partition. Even the judges were frightened as they looked at Gavrilo. "Now," they think, "suppose he actually makes up his mind to do some harm to his neighbor or himself." And the little old judge began to speak:—

"See here, brothers! you had better make up your minds to become friends again. You, brother Gavrilo, did you do right in striking a woman with child? It is fortunate for you that God spared her, else what a sin you would have committed. Was it right? Confess, and ask his pardon, and he will forgive you. Then we'll change the sentence."

When the secretary heard it, he said:—

"That cannot be done, because, according to the 117th article, there was no peaceful settlement; but the judge's sentence was passed, and the sentence must be carried out."

But the judge did not heed the secretary.

"That will do.... hold your tongue! There is only one article, brother, and that is the first, Remember God; and God has commanded you to become reconciled."

And again the judge tried to persuade the muzhiks, but his words were in vain. Gavrilo would not heed him.

"I am almost fifty years old," he said. "I have a married son, and I was never beaten in all my life; but now this pig-headed Vanka has brought me under the lash, and yet I am to ask his forgiveness, am I? Well, that will do! Only let Vanka look out for me!"

Gavrilo's voice trembled again; he could talk no longer. He turned around and went out.

It was ten versts from the court-house to the dvor,

and it was late when Ivan reached home. The women had already gone to get the cattle. He unharnessed his horses, put things away, and went into the izba. There was no one in the izba. The children had not yet returned from the field, and the women were after the cattle. Ivan went in, sat down on the bench, and became lost in thought.

He remembered how the sentence was read to Gavrilo, and how he turned pale, and faced the partition; and his heart felt oppressed. He imagined himself in the same position, about to receive the punishment of lashes. And he began to pity Gavrilo. And he heard the old man coughing on the oven, then shifting from side to side, stretching out his legs, and then clambering down to the floor. The old man clambered down, dragged himself to the bench, and sat down. The old man found it hard to drag himself to the bench; he coughed and coughed; and when his coughing fit was over, he leaned his elbows on the table, and said: —

"Well, was he sentenced?"

Ivan says: —

"Sentenced to twenty lashes."

The old man shook his head.

"You are doing wrong, Ivan!" says he. "Oh, very wrong! Not to him, but to yourself, you are doing wrong. Now, suppose they lash his back; will it do you any good?"

"He won't do it any more," said Ivan.

"What won't he do any more? Is he doing anything worse than you do?"

"Do you want to know what he has done to me?" asked Ivan. "Why, he nearly killed the woman, and even now he threatened to set the house on fire! Why must I beg his pardon for it?"

The old man sighed, and said: —

"This whole free world is open for you, Ivan, to come and go upon; and because I have been lying on the oven for these last few years, do you think that you see all, and I see nothing. No, young man, you see nothing at all; anger has blinded your eyes. The faults of

others are before you, but your own are behind your back. You say he did wrong; if he were the only man to do wrong, then there would be no wickedness in the world. Does wrong arise among people on account of one man? There must be two in a quarrel. You can see his sins, but you can't see your own. Had he been the only one to do wrong, and you had done right, there would have been no quarrel. Who pulled out his beard? Who threw down his hayrick? Who dragged him around in the courts? and yet you blame him for everything! Your own life is wrong, and that is bad. That is n't the way I used to live, brother; that is n't what I taught you. Is that the way the old man, his father, and I used to live? How did we live? Like good neighbors. If he was out of flour, the wife would come — 'Uncle Frol, we are out of flour.' — 'Just go to the closet, young woman, and get what you need.' He had no one to tend to the horses — 'Go, Vanyatka,[1] and take care of his horses.' And whatever I was short of, I would go to him — 'Uncle Gordyeï, I need such and such a thing.' — 'Take it, Uncle Frol!' And so it used to go with us. And it used to be the same nice way with you. And how is it now? Here, lately, a soldier was telling about Plevna; well, your quarrel is worse than that of Plevna. Is this living? It 's a sin! You are a muzhik, you are master of a house. You will have to answer for it. What are you teaching your women and children to do? To fight like dogs! The other day, Taraska, that dirty-nosed rascal, was abusing Aunt Arina before his mother, and his mother was laughing at it. Is that good? You 'll have to answer for it. Just think about your soul. Ought things to go on this way? You give me a word — I give you two back; you give me a slap — I give back two. No, my dear. Christ went about on earth, but He did not teach us fools such things. If a word is said to you, hold your peace: his own conscience will accuse him. That is the way He taught us, batyushka. If any one slap you, turn the other cheek: 'Here, strike, if I am worth it.' And his conscience will

[1] Diminished diminutive of Ivan.

prick him. He will grow humble, and hear what you have to say. That is the way He commanded us, but not to be stiff-necked. Why don't you say something? am I not telling you the truth?"

Ivan said nothing — he was listening.

The old man had a fit of coughing, raised some phlegm, and began to speak again.

"Do you think that what Christ taught us is wrong? It was intended for us for our good. Think about your earthly life: has it been good, or bad, for you since this Plevna began between you? Just count up how much you have lost by these lawsuits, your traveling expenses, and all you have spent in eating. Those sons of yours are growing like young eagles: you ought to be living and enjoying life, and 'climb the mountain'; and here you are losing what you have! And why is it? It is all for nothing! All because of your pride! You ought to go with your children, and work in the field, and do the planting yourself; but the devil drives you off, either to the judge or to some pettifogger. You don't plow at the right time, you don't plant at the right time, and our little mother[1] does not bring forth her fruit. Why were there no oats this year? When did you sow them? When you came from town! And what did you gain at law? You got in up to your neck! Ekh! you foolish fellow! just attend to business. Work with your boys in the field and house; and if any one insults you, then forgive them in God's name; and you will be far better off, and your heart will feel much easier."

Ivan said nothing.

"Just see here, Vanya! Listen to me: I am an old man. Go and harness the roan, go right back to court again, have all your cases dismissed, and in the morning go to Gavrilo, beg his forgiveness in God's name, invite him to the house, — to-morrow is a holiday" — this happened to be in September, just before the Birthday of the Virgin, — "light the samovarchik,[2] bring out a bottle and clear up all the sins so that they may not happen again, and tell the babas and the children to do the same."

[1] The earth. [2] Little tea-urn.

Ivan sighed, and thought, "The old man says right," and his heart softened; only he did not know how to begin, how to become reconciled now.

And the old man began again, as if he read his thoughts.

"Go ahead, Vanya! don't put it off. Put out the fire when it first begins; but when it burns up, it is hard to do it."

The old man started to say something more, but he did not finish; the women came into the izba, and chattered like magpies. All the news had reached them, — how Gavrilo had been sentenced to be lashed, and how he had threatened to set their house on fire. They had heard everything, and they made their own additions; and they had already succeeded in getting into a new quarrel with Gavrilo's women folks in the pasture.

They began to tell how Gavrilo's daughter-in-law had threatened to set the marshal on them. The marshal, it seemed, took Gavrilo's part. He would reverse the whole case; and the school-teacher, it seemed, had written a second petition to the Tsar himself, against Ivan, and put in the petition all the things, about the bolt, and about the garden, and half of the farm would now be given to them.

As Ivan listened to their speeches, his heart grew hard again, and he changed his mind about becoming reconciled with Gavrilo.

The farmer always has many things to do about his place. Ivan did not stop to talk to the women, but he got up and left the izba; he went to the threshing-floor and to the shed. Before he had finished his work and returned to the yard, the little sun was already set; the boys, too, had come in from the field. The two had been plowing for the spring corn. Ivan met them, asked them about their work; he helped them put away their tools, laid aside the torn horse-collar; he was going also to put away the poles under the shed, but it had already become quite dark.

Ivan left the poles till the next day, but he fed the cattle; he opened the gates, and let Taraska and his

horses out into the street to go to the pasture for the night, and shut them again, and put the board under the gate.

"Now for supper and bed," thought Ivan, as he picked up the torn collar and went into the izba.

By this time he had forgotten all about Gavrilo, and all that his father had said to him. Before he had taken hold of the door-knob, and entered the vestibule, he heard his neighbor from behind the fence scolding against some one, in a hoarse voice. "For this I call him a devil," cried Gavrilo, addressing some one.

"He ought to be killed!"

When Ivan heard these words, all his former anger against his neighbor flamed up in him. He stood for a while and listened while Gavrilo was scolding. When Gavrilo became quiet, Ivan went into the izba. When he entered, the room was lighted up. The young woman was sitting in one corner with her spinning-wheel, the old woman was getting supper, the oldest son was twisting cloth around his lapti.[1] The second one was sitting by the table with a little book. Taraska was going out for the night.

In the izba, all had been pleasant, comfortable, if it had not been for this annoyance — a bad neighbor.

Ivan came in angry, pushed the cat from the bench, scolded the women because the slop-pail was not in the right place. Ivan felt discouraged; he sat down, frowned, and began to mend the horse-collar; and Gavrilo's words kept rising in his mind, how he threatened him at court, and how he just shouted in a hoarse voice about some one, "He ought to be killed!"

The old woman prepared supper for Taraska; he ate it, put on his sheepskin shubyonka and his kaftan, tightened his belt, took some bread, and went out to the horses. His older brother intended to see him out; but Ivan rose, and went to the front steps.

[1] *Lapti* are the wooden sandals worn by the peasants of Great Russia and White Russia instead of boots, — the leg being wrapped up in rags or cloths, and fastened with strings. One of the Russian poets sings, "*Staranis sapogi, lapti gulaiut;*" — "Away with boots, let the lapti have full sway;" that is, the peasant will sometimes have his share in the world's fun. — ED.

It was already beginning to grow quite dark out of doors; the clouds covered the sky, and a wind sprang up. Ivan descended the steps, helped his son to mount, stirred up the little colt, then he stood for a while looking and listening as Taraska galloped down through the village, as he greeted the other boys, and as they all went out of hearing distance. Ivan stood long at the gate, and Gavrilo's words did not leave his mind: —

"Something of his may burn worse."

"He would not take pity on himself," thought Ivan. "Everything is dried up, and there is a wind besides. He might get in from the rear, start a fire, and all would be up with us; the villain might burn us up, and not get caught. Now, if I could only catch him, he would not get off so easy."

And thus it occurred to Ivan not to go back by the front way, but to go straight into the street, and behind the gate.

"No, I 'll go round the dvor. Who knows what he 's up to now?"

And Ivan crept quietly alongside of the gates. Just as he turned around the corner, and looked in the direction of the fence, it seemed to him that he saw something move in the corner, as if some one stuck his head out and then hid again.

Ivan stood still, and held his breath. He listened, and strained his eyes; all was quiet; only the wind was rustling the little leaves on the twigs, and whistling in the straw-heap. At first it was as dark as a pocket.[1] But soon his eyes got accustomed to the darkness; and Ivan could see the whole corner, and the sokha-plow, and the sloping roof. He stood for a while, and gazed, but there was no one to be seen.

"It must have been a deception," thought Ivan; "still, I will make a turn around."

And he went stealthily alongside the shed. Ivan crept softly, in his lapti, so that he could not hear his own steps. He reached the corner, and lo! at the very farther end something near the plow flashed up and

[1] Literally, "as if an eye were taken out."

instantly vanished again. A pang seized Ivan's heart, and he stood still. He had scarcely stopped before a brighter light flashed up in the same place, and a man with a cap on was plainly seen squatting down with his back turned, and was trying to kindle a bundle of straw that he held in his hand.

Ivan's heart began to flutter in his breast like a bird; and he braced himself up, and advanced with long steps, but so cautiously that he himself could not hear them.

"There," says he to himself, "I've got him now; I've caught him in the very act."

But before Ivan had gone two more steps, suddenly something flared up brightly, — brightly, but in an entirely different place; and it was no small fire, either; and the straw blazed up under the pent-roof, and began to spread toward the house; and then Gavrilo was seen standing in the light.

Like a hawk on a sparrow, Ivan threw himself on the cripple.

"I'll choke the life out of him! he won't escape me this time," he says to himself.

But the cripple must have heard his steps; he looked around, and, in spite of his lameness, leaped like a rabbit along by the shed.

"You shan't escape!" shouted Ivan, and he flew after him.

But just as he was about to get him by the collar, Gavrilo slipped from under his hand, and Ivan caught him by the coat-tail. The coat-tail tore out, and Ivan fell. Ivan leaped to his feet. "Help! Catch him!" And he started after him again.

But, by the time he got to his feet, Gavrilo was already at his own dvor; but Ivan caught up with him, even then. But, as he tried to lay hands on him, something struck him on the head, as if a stone had hit his temple. It was Gavrilo, who had picked up an oak stave; and when Ivan came up to him, he struck him on the head with all his force.

Ivan saw stars; everything grew dark; he staggered, and fell senseless.

When he came to, Gavrilo was gone; it was as light as day; in the direction of his yard there was a noise like a machine, a crackling and roaring. Ivan turned around, and saw that the back shed was already gone, that the side shed was on fire, and the flame and smoke and burning straw were drifting toward the izba.

"What does this mean? Bratsui!"[1] exclaimed Ivan, lifting his hand and slapping his thigh. "All it needs, is to pull down the pent-roof, and trample it out. What does it mean, bratsui?" he repeated.

He tried to shout, but he had no breath; his voice stuck in his throat. He tried to run, but his feet refused to move; they tripped each other up. He merely walked and staggered; again his breath failed him. He stood for a moment, got his wind, and then started again. While he was making his way round to the shed, and getting to the fire, the side shed also burned to the ground, and the corner of the izba and the gates caught fire. The flames poured up from the izba, and all entrance to the yard was cut off. A great crowd gathered, but nothing could be done. The neighbors were carrying out their own effects, and driving their cattle out of their yards.

After Ivan's dvor had burned up, Gavrilo's took fire; the wind arose, and carried the fire across the street. Half the village was destroyed.

From Ivan's house the old man was rescued with difficulty, and his people rushed out with only the clothes they had on. Everything else was burned, with the exception of the horses which had gone to the night-pasture. All the cattle were destroyed. The poultry were burned on their roosts; the carts, the plows, the harrows, the women's boxes, the corn and wheat in the granary, — everything was destroyed.

Gavrilo's cattle were rescued, and a few of his effects were removed in safety.

The fire lasted all night long. Ivan stood by his dvor, and gazed, and kept repeating, "What does this

[1] *Bratsui*, brothers! an exclamation.

mean? Bratsui! All it needs, is to pull it down, and trample it out."

But when the ceiling of his izba fell in, he crept up close to the fire, caught hold of a burning beam, and tried to pull it out. The women saw him, and began to call him back; but he pulled the beam out, and went back after another, but staggered, and fell into the fire.

Then his son dashed in after him, and pulled him out. Ivan's beard and hair were burned off, his clothes were scorched, his hands were ruined, and yet he did not notice it.

"He has lost his wits from grief," said the crowd.

The fire began to die down; and Ivan still stood in the same place, and kept repeating, "Bratsui! Only pull it down!"

In the morning the starosta sent his son after Ivan.

"Uncle Ivan, your father is dying; he wants you to come and say good-by."

Ivan had forgotten all about his father, and did not comprehend what they said to him.

"What father?" says he; "wants whom?"

"He wants you to come and bid him good-by; he is dying in our izba. Come, let us go, Uncle Ivan," said the village elder's son, and took him by the arm. Ivan followed the starosta's son.

The old man, when he was rescued, was surrounded by burning straw, and was badly burned. He was taken to the starosta's, at the farther end of the village. That part of the village was not burned.

When Ivan came to his father, there was no one in the izba except a little old woman, — the starosta's wife, — and some children on the oven. All the rest were at the fire. The old man was lying on the bench with a little candle in his hand, and was gazing at the door. When his son entered, he started. The old woman went to him, and told him that his son had come. He asked him to come nearer. Ivan approached, and the old man said: —

"Well, Vanyatka,"[1] he said, "I told you so. Who burned up the village?"

"He did, batyushka," said Ivan. "He did! I myself caught him at it. Right before my eyes he touched off the roof. All I needed to do was to pull out the bunch of burning straw, trample it down, and it would never have happened."

"Ivan," said the old man, "my death has come; you, too, will have to die. Whose sin was it?"

Ivan looked at his father, and said nothing. He could not utter a word.

"Tell me in God's presence! Whose sin was it? What did I tell you?"

Only at this moment Ivan came to himself, and comprehended all. He began to snuffle with his nose, and said: —

"Mine, batyushka!" and he fell on his knees before his father, began to weep, and said: —

"Forgive me, batyushka; I am guilty before you and before God."

The old man waved his arms, took the candle in his left hand, and pointed with his right to his forehead; tried to cross himself, but failed to lift it high enough, and stopped short.

"Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee, O Lord!" he said, and then he turned his eyes on his son.

"But Vanka, Vanka!"

"What is it, batyushka?"

"What ought you to do now?"

Ivan kept on weeping.

"I don't know, batyushka," he said. "How are we going to live now, batyushka?"

The old man shut his eyes, moved his lips, as if he were trying to gather his strength; and then he opened his eyes again, and said: —

"You will get along! if you live with God — you will get along."

The old man stopped speaking, and smiled, and said: —

[1] Affectionate diminutive of Ivan; like Vanka, Vanyusha, Vanyushka. Ivan is colloquial for Ioann, John.

"Look here, Vanya! don't tell who set the fire. Hide your neighbor's sin, and God will forgive two."

The old man took the candle in both his hands, held them crossed on his breast, sighed, stretched himself, and died.

Ivan did not expose Gavrilo, and no one knew what was the cause of the fire.

And Ivan's heart grew soft toward Gavrilo, and Gavrilo was surprised because Ivan did not tell any one about him.

At first Gavrilo was afraid of him, but afterward he got accustomed to it. The muzhiks ceased to quarrel, their families also. While they were rebuilding, both families lived in one dvor; and when the village was restored, and the dvors were put at a greater distance apart, Ivan and Gavrilo again became neighbors in one nest.

And Ivan and Gavrilo lived in neighborly fashion, just as the old men had formerly lived. And Ivan Shcherbakof remembered the old man's advice, and God's proof that a fire ought to be quenched at the beginning.

And if any one ever did him any harm, he made no attempt to retaliate, but tried to arrange things; and if any one ever called him a bad name, he did not try to outdo him in his reply, but he tried to teach him not to say bad things; and thus he taught the women and children of his household; and thus Ivan Shcherbakof reformed, and began to live better than before.

WHERE LOVE IS, THERE GOD IS ALSO

(1885)

IN the city lived the shoemaker, Martuin Avdyeitch. He lived in a basement, in a little room with one window. The window looked out on the street. Through the window he used to watch the people passing by; although only their feet could be seen, yet by the boots Martuin Avdyeitch recognized the people. Martuin Avdyeitch had lived long in one place, and had many acquaintances. Few pairs of boots in his district had not been in his hands once and again. Some he would half-sole, some he would patch, some he would stitch around, and occasionally he would also put on new uppers. And through the window he often recognized his work.

Avdyeitch had plenty to do, because he was a faithful workman, used good material, did not make exorbitant charges, and kept his word. If it was possible for him to finish an order by a certain time, he would accept it; otherwise, he would not deceive you, — he would tell you so beforehand. And all knew Avdyeitch, and he was never out of work.

Avdyeitch had always been a good man; but as he grew old, he began to think more about his soul, and get nearer to God. Martuin's wife had died when he was still living with his master. His wife left him a boy three years old. None of their other children had lived. All the eldest had died in childhood. Martuin at first intended to send his little son to his sister in the village, but afterward he felt sorry for him; he thought to himself: —

"It will be hard for my Kapitoshka to live in a strange family. I shall keep him with me."

And Avdyeitch left his master, and went into lodgings with his little son. But God gave Avdyeitch no luck with his children. As Kapitoshka grew older, he began to help his father, and would have been a delight to him, but a sickness fell on him, he went to bed, suffered a week, and died. Martuin buried his son, and fell into despair. So deep was this despair that he began to complain of God. Martuin fell into such a melancholy state, that more than once he prayed to God for death, and reproached God because He had not taken him who was an old man, instead of his beloved only son. Avdyeitch also ceased to go to church.

And once a little old man from the same district came from Troïtsa[1] to see Avdyeitch; for seven years he had been wandering about. Avdyeitch talked with him, and began to complain about his sorrows.

"I have no desire to live any longer," he said: "I only wish I was dead. That is all I pray God for. I am a man without anything to hope for now."

And the little old man said to him: —

"You don't talk right, Martuin: we must not judge God's doings. The world moves, not by our skill, but by God's will. God decreed for your son to die, — for you — to live. So it is for the best. And you are in despair, because you wish to live for your own happiness."

"But what shall one live for?" asked Martuin.

And the little old man said: —

"We must live for God, Martuin. He gives you life, and for His sake you must live. When you begin to live for Him, you will not grieve over anything, and all will seem easy to you."

Martuin kept silent for a moment, and then said, "But how can one live for God?"

And the little old man said: —

"Christ has taught us how to live for God. You know how to read? Buy a Testament, and read it; there you

[1] Trinity, a famous monastery, pilgrimage to which is reckoned a virtue. Avdyeitch calls this *zemlyak-starichok*, *Bozhi chelovyek*, God's man. — Ed.

will learn how to live for God. Everything is explained there."

And these words kindled a fire in Avdyeitch's heart. And he went that very same day, bought a New Testament in large print, and began to read.

At first Avdyeitch intended to read only on holidays; but as he began to read, it so cheered his soul that he used to read every day. At times he would become so absorbed in reading, that all the kerosene in the lamp would burn out, and still he could not tear himself away. And so Avdyeitch used to read every evening.

And the more he read, the clearer he understood what God wanted of him, and how one should live for God; and his heart kept growing easier and easier. Formerly, when he lay down to sleep, he used to sigh and groan, and always thought of his Kapitoshka; and now his only exclamation was: —

"Glory to Thee! glory to Thee, Lord! Thy will be done."

And from that time Avdyeitch's whole life was changed. In other days he, too, used to drop into a public-house[1] as a holiday amusement, to drink a cup of tea; and he was not averse to a little brandy either. He would take a drink with some acquaintance, and leave the saloon, not intoxicated exactly, yet in a happy frame of mind, and inclined to talk nonsense, and shout, and use abusive language at a person. Now he left off that sort of thing. His life became quiet and joyful. In the morning he would sit down to work, finish his allotted task, then take the little lamp from the hook, put it on the table, get his book from the shelf, open it, and sit down to read. And the more he read, the more he understood, and the brighter and happier it grew in his heart.

Once it happened that Martuin read till late into the night. He was reading the Gospel of Luke. He was reading over the sixth chapter; and he was reading the verses: —

"And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak

[1] *Traktir.*

forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

He read farther also those verses, where God speaks: "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.*"

Avdyeitch read these words, and joy filled his soul. He took off his spectacles, put them down on the book, leaned his elbows on the table, and became lost in thought. And he began to measure his life by these words. And he thought to himself: —

"Is my house built on the rock, or on the sand? 'T is well if on the rock. It is so easy when you are alone by yourself; it seems as if you had done everything as God commands; but when you forget yourself, you sin again. Yet I shall still struggle on. It is very good. Help me, Lord!"

Thus ran his thoughts; he wanted to go to bed, but he felt loath to tear himself away from the book. And he began to read farther in the seventh chapter. He read about the centurion, he read about the widow's son, he read about the answer given to John's disciples, and finally he came to that place where the rich Pharisee desired the Lord to sit at meat with him; and he read how the woman that was a sinner anointed His feet, and washed them with her tears, and how He forgave her. He reached the forty-fourth verse, and began to read: —

"*And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon,*

Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment."

He finished reading these verses, and thought to himself: —

"*Thou gavest me no water for my feet, thou gavest me no kiss. My head with oil thou didst not anoint.*"

And again Avdyeitch took off his spectacles, put them down on the book, and again he became lost in thought.

"It seems that Pharisee must have been such a man as I am. I, too, apparently have thought only of myself, — how I might have my tea, be warm and comfortable, but never to think about my guest. He thought about himself, but there was not the least care taken of the guest. And who was his guest? The Lord Himself. If He had come to me, should I have done the same way?"

Avdyeitch rested his head upon both his arms, and did not notice that he fell asleep.

"Martuin!" suddenly seemed to sound in his ears.

Martuin started from his sleep: —

"Who is here?"

He turned around, glanced toward the door — no one.

Again he fell into a doze. Suddenly he plainly heard: —

"Martuin! Ah, Martuin! look to-morrow on the street. I am coming."

Martuin awoke, rose from the chair, began to rub his eyes. He himself could not tell whether he heard those words in his dream, or in reality. He turned down his lamp, and went to bed.

At daybreak next morning, Avdyeitch rose, made his prayer to God, lighted the stove, put on the shchi[1] and

[1] Cabbage-soup.

the kasha,[1] put the water in the samovar, put on his apron, and sat down by the window to work.

And while he was working, he kept thinking about all that had happened the day before. It seemed to him at one moment that it was a dream, and now he had really heard a voice.

"Well," he said to himself, "such things have been."

Martuin was sitting by the window, and looking out more than he was working. When any one passed by in boots which he did not know, he would bend down, look out of the window, in order to see, not only the feet, but also the face.

The dvornik[2] passed by in new felt boots,[3] the water-carrier passed by; then there came up to the window an old soldier of Nicholas's time, in an old pair of laced felt boots, with a shovel in his hands. Avdyeitch recognized him by his felt boots. The old man's name was Stepanuitch; and a neighboring merchant, out of charity, gave him a home with him. He was required to assist the dvornik. Stepanuitch began to shovel away the snow from in front of Avdyeitch's window. Avdyeitch glanced at him, and took up his work again.

"Pshaw! I must be getting crazy in my old age," said Avdyeitch, and laughed at himself. "Stepanuitch is clearing away the snow, and I imagine that Christ is coming to see me. I was entirely out of my mind, old dotard that I am!"

Avdyeitch sewed about a dozen stitches, and then felt impelled to look through the window again. He looked out again through the window, and saw that Stepanuitch had leaned his shovel against the wall, and was warming himself, and resting. He was an old broken-down man; evidently he had not strength enough even to shovel the snow. Avdyeitch said to himself: —

"I will give him some tea; by the way, the samovar has only just gone out." Avdyeitch laid down his awl, rose from his seat, put the samovar on the table, poured out the tea, and tapped with his finger at the glass.

[1] Gruel. [2] House-porter. [3] *Valenki.*

Stepanuitch turned around, and came to the window. Avdyeitch beckoned to him, and went to open the door.

"Come in, warm yourself a little," he said. "You must be cold."

"May Christ reward you for this! my bones ache," said Stepanuitch.

Stepanuitch came in, and shook off the snow, tried to wipe his feet, so as not to soil the floor, but staggered.

"Don't trouble to wipe your feet. I will clean it up myself; we are used to such things. Come in and sit down," said Avdyeitch. "Here, drink a cup of tea."

And Avdyeitch filled two glasses, and handed one to his guest; while he himself poured his tea into a saucer, and began to blow it.

Stepanuitch finished drinking his glass of tea, turned the glass upside down,[1] put the half-eaten lump of sugar on it, and began to express his thanks. But it was evident he wanted some more.

"Have some more," said Avdyeitch, filling both his own glass and his guest's. Avdyeitch drank his tea, but from time to time glanced out into the street.

"Are you expecting any one?" asked his guest.

"Am I expecting any one? I am ashamed even to tell whom I expect. I am, and I am not, expecting some one; but one word has kindled a fire in my heart. Whether it is a dream, or something else, I do not know. Don't you see, brother, I was reading yesterday the Gospel about Christ the Batyushka; how He suffered, how He walked on the earth. I suppose you have heard about it?"

"Indeed I have," replied Stepanuitch; "but we are people in darkness, we can't read."

"Well, now, I was reading about that very thing, — how He walked on the earth; I read, you know, how He came to the Pharisee, and the Pharisee did not treat Him hospitably. Well, and so, my brother, I was reading yesterday, about this very thing, and was thinking to myself how he did not receive Christ the Batyushka, with honor. Suppose, for example, He should come to me, or

[1] To signify he was satisfied; a custom among the Russians. — ED.

any one else, I said to myself, I should not even know how to receive Him. And he gave Him no reception at all. Well! while I was thus thinking, I fell asleep, brother, and I heard some one call me by name. I got up; the voice, just as if some one whispered, said, 'Be on the watch; I shall come to-morrow.' And this happened twice. Well! would you believe it, it got into my head? I scolded myself — and yet I am expecting Him, the Batyushka."

Stepanuitch shook his head, and said nothing; he finished drinking his glass of tea, and put it on the side; but Avdyeitch picked up the glass again, and filled it once more.

"Drink some more for your good health. You see, I have an idea that, when the Batyushka went about on this earth, He disdained no one, and had more to do with the simple people. He always went to see the simple people. He picked out His disciples more from among folk like such sinners as we are, from the working-class. Said He, whoever exalts himself, shall be humbled, and he who is humbled shall become exalted. Said He, you call me Lord, and, said He, I wash your feet. Whoever wishes, said He, to be the first, the same shall be a servant to all. Because, said He, blessed are the poor, the humble, the kind, the generous."

And Stepanuitch forgot about his tea; he was an old man, and easily moved to tears. He was listening, and the tears rolled down his face.

"Come, now, have some more tea," said Avdyeitch; but Stepanuitch made the sign of the cross, thanked him, turned down his glass, and arose.

"Thanks to you," he says, "Martuin Avdyeitch, for treating me kindly, and satisfying me, soul and body."

"You are welcome; come in again; always glad to see a friend," said Avdyeitch.

Stepanuitch departed; and Martuin poured out the rest of the tea, drank it up, put away the dishes, and sat down again by the window to work, to stitch on a patch. He kept stitching away, and at the same time looking through the window. He was expecting Christ, and was

all the while thinking of Him and His deeds, and his head was filled with the different speeches of Christ.

Two soldiers passed by: one wore boots furnished by the crown, and the other one, boots that he had made; then the master[1] of the next house passed by in shining galoshes; then a baker with a basket passed by. All passed by; and now there came also by the window a woman in woolen stockings and rustic bashmaks on her feet. She passed by the window, and stood still near the window-case.

Avdyeitch looked up at her from the window, and saw it was a stranger, a woman poorly clad, and with a child; she was standing by the wall with her back to the wind, trying to wrap up the child, and she had nothing to wrap it up in. The woman was dressed in shabby summer clothes; and from behind the frame, Avdyeitch could hear the child crying, and the woman trying to pacify it; but she was not able to pacify it.

Avdyeitch got up, went to the door, ascended the steps, and cried: —

"My good woman. Hey! my good woman!"[2]

The woman heard him and turned around.

"Why are you standing in the cold with the child? Come into my room, where it is warm; you can manage it better. Here, this way!"

The woman was astonished. She saw an old, old man, in an apron, with spectacles on his nose, calling her to him. She followed him. They descended the steps and entered the room; the old man led the woman to his bed.

"There," says he, "sit down, my good woman, nearer to the stove; you can get warm, and nurse the little one."

"I have no milk for him. I myself have not eaten anything since morning," said the woman; but, nevertheless, she took the baby to her breast.

Avdyeitch shook his head, went to the table, brought out the bread and a dish, opened the oven-door, poured into the dish some cabbage-soup, took out the pot with

[1] *Khozyaïn.* [2] *Umnitsa aumnitsa!* literally, clever one.

the gruel, but it was not cooked as yet; so he filled the dish with shchi only, and put it on the table. He got the bread, took the towel down from the hook, and spread it upon the table.

"Sit down," he says, "and eat, my good woman; and I will mind the little one. You see, I once had children of my own; I know how to handle them."

The woman crossed herself, sat down at the table, and began to eat; while Avdyeitch took a seat on the bed near the infant. Avdyeitch kept smacking and smacking to it with his lips; but it was a poor kind of smacking, for he had no teeth. The little one kept on crying. And it occurred to Avdyeitch to threaten the little one with his finger; he waved, waved his finger right before the child's mouth, and hastily withdrew it. He did not put it to its mouth, because his finger was black, and soiled with wax. And the little one looked at his finger, and became quiet; then it began to smile, and Avdyeitch also was glad. While the woman was eating, she told who she was, and whither she was going.

Said she: —

"I am a soldier's wife. It is now seven months since they sent my husband away off, and no tidings. I lived out as cook; the baby was born; no one cared to keep me with a child. This is the third month that I have been struggling along without a place. I ate up all I had. I wanted to engage as a wet-nurse — no one would take me — I am too thin, they say. I have just been to the merchant's wife, where lives a young woman I know, and so they promised to take us in. I thought that was the end of it. But she told me to come next week. And she lives a long way off. I got tired out; and it tired him too, my heart's darling. Fortunately our landlady takes pity on us for the sake of Christ, and gives us a room, else I don't know how I should manage to get along."

Avdyeitch sighed, and said: —

"Have n't you any warm clothes?"

"Now is the time, friend, to wear warm clothes; but

yesterday I pawned my last skawl for a twenty-kopek piece." [1]

The woman came to the bed, and took the child; and Avdyeitch rose, went to the partition, rummaged round, and succeeded in finding an old coat.

"Na!" says he; "it is a poor thing, yet you may turn it to some use."

The woman looked at the coat and looked at the old man; she took the coat, and burst into tears; and Avdyeitch turned away his head; crawling under the bed, he pushed out a little trunk, rummaged in it, and sat down again opposite the woman.

And the woman said: —

"May Christ bless you, little grandfather! [2] He must have sent me to your window. My little baby would have frozen to death. When I started out it was warm, but now it has grown cold. And He, the Batyushka, led you to look through the window and take pity on me, an unfortunate."

Avdyeitch smiled, and said: —

"Indeed, He did that! I have been looking through the window, my good woman, for some wise reason."

And Martuin told the soldier's wife his dream, and how he heard the voice, — how the Lord promised to come and see him that day.

"All things are possible," said the woman. She rose, put on the coat, wrapped up her little child in it; and, as she started to take leave, she thanked Avdyeitch again.

"Take this, for Christ's sake," said Avdyeitch, giving her a twenty-kopek piece; "redeem your shawl."

She made the sign of the cross, and Avdyeitch made the sign of the cross and went with her to the door.

The woman went away. Avdyeitch ate some shchi, washed the dishes, and sat down again to work. While he was working he still remembered the window; when the window grew darker he immediately looked out to

[1] *Dvagrivennui*, silver, worth sixteen cents.
[2] *Diedushka.*

see who was passing by. Acquaintances passed by and strangers passed by, and there was nothing out of the ordinary.

But here Avdyeitch saw that an old apple-woman had stopped in front of his window. She carried a basket with apples. Only a few were left, as she had evidently sold them nearly all out; and over her shoulder she had a bag full of chips. She must have gathered them up in some new building, and was on her way home. One could see that the bag was heavy on her shoulder; she tried to shift it to the other shoulder. So she lowered the bag on the sidewalk, stood the basket with the apples on a little post, and began to shake down the splinters in the bag. And while she was shaking her bag, a little boy in a torn cap came along, picked up an apple from the basket, and was about to make his escape; but the old woman noticed it, turned around, and caught the youngster by his sleeve. The little boy began to struggle, tried to tear himself away; but the old woman grasped him with both hands, knocked off his cap, and caught him by the hair.

The little boy was screaming, the old woman was scolding. Avdyeitch lost no time in putting away his awl; he threw it upon the floor, sprang to the door, — he even stumbled on the stairs, and dropped his spectacles, — and rushed out into the street.

The old woman was pulling the youngster by his hair, and was scolding, and threatening to take him to the policeman; the youngster was defending himself, and denying the charge.

"I did not take it," he said; "what are you licking me for? Let me go!"

Avdyeitch tried to separate them. He took the boy by his arm, and said: —

"Let him go, babushka; forgive him, for Christ's sake."

"I will forgive him so that he won't forget it till the new broom grows. I am going to take the little villain to the police."

Avdyeitch began to entreat the old woman: —

"Let him go, babushka," he said, "he will never do it again. Let him go, for Christ's sake."

The old woman let him loose; the boy started to run, but Avdyeitch kept him back.

"Ask the babushka's forgiveness," he said, "and don't you ever do it again; I saw you take the apple."

The boy burst into tears, and began to ask forgiveness.

"There now! that's right; and here's an apple for you."

And Avdyeitch took an apple from the basket, and gave it to the boy.

"I will pay you for it, babushka," he said to the old woman.

"You ruin them that way, the good-for-nothings," said the old woman. "He ought to be treated so that he would remember it for a whole week."

"Eh, babushka, babushka," said Avdyeitch, "that is right according to our judgment, but not according to God's. If he is to be whipped for an apple, then what ought to be done to us for our sins?"

The old woman was silent.

And Avdyeitch told her the parable of the master who forgave a debtor all that he owed him, and how the debtor went and began to choke one who owed him.

The old woman listened, and the boy stood listening.

"God has commanded us to forgive," said Avdyeitch, "else we, too, may not be forgiven. All should be forgiven, and the thoughtless especially."

The old woman shook her head, and sighed.

"That's so," said she; "but the trouble is that they are very much spoiled."

"Then, we who are older must teach them," said Avdyeitch.

"That's just what I say," remarked the old woman. "I myself have had seven of them, — only one daughter is left."

And the old woman began to relate where and how she lived with her daughter, and how many grandchildren she had. "Here," she says, "my strength is only so-so, and yet I have to work. I pity the youngsters —

my grandchildren — but what nice children they are! No one gives me such a welcome as they do. Aksintka won't go to any one but me. 'Babushka, dear babushka, loveliest.'"

And the old woman grew quite sentimental.

"Of course, it is a childish trick. God be with him," said she, pointing to the boy.

The woman was just about to lift the bag up on her shoulder, when the boy ran up, and said: —

"Let me carry it, babushka; it is on my way."

The old woman nodded her head, and put the bag on the boy's back.

And side by side they passed along the street.

And the old woman even forgot to ask Avdyeitch to pay for the apple. Avdyeitch stood motionless, and kept gazing after them; and he heard them talking all the time as they walked away. After Avdyeitch saw them disappear, he returned to his room; he found his eye-glasses on the stairs, — they were not broken; he picked up his awl, and sat down to work again.

After working a little while, it grew darker, so that he could not see to sew; he saw the lamplighter passing by to light the street-lamps.

"It must be time to make a light," he said to himself; so he got his little lamp ready, hung it up, and betook himself again to his work. He had one boot already finished; he turned it around, looked at it: "Well done." He put away his tools, swept off the cuttings, cleared off the bristles and ends, took the lamp, set it on the table, and took down the Gospels from the shelf. He intended to open the book at the very place where he had yesterday put a piece of leather as a mark, but it happened to open at another place; and the moment Avdyeitch opened the Testament, he recollected his last night's dream. And as soon as he remembered it, it seemed as if he heard some one stepping about behind him. Avdyeitch looked around, and saw — there, in the dark corner, it seemed as if people were standing; he was at a loss to know who they were. And a voice whispered in his ear: —

"Martuin — ah, Martuin! did you not recognize me?"

"Who?" exclaimed Avdyeitch.

"Me," repeated the voice. "It was I;" and Stepanuitch stepped forth from the dark corner; he smiled, and like a little cloud faded away, and soon vanished. ....

"And it was I," said the voice.

From the dark corner stepped forth the woman with her child; the woman smiled, the child laughed, and they also vanished.

"And it was I," continued the voice; both the old woman and the boy with the apple stepped forward; both smiled and vanished.

Avdyeitch's soul rejoiced; he crossed himself, put on his spectacles, and began to read the Evangelists where it happened to open. On the upper part of the page he read: —

"*For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in.*" ....

And on the lower part of the page he read this: —

"*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*" (St. Matthew, chap. xxv.).

And Avdyeitch understood that his dream had not deceived him; that the Saviour really called on him that day, and that he really received Him.

A CANDLE

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." — MATT. v. 38, 39.

THIS affair took place in the days when there were masters. There used to be all kinds of masters. There were those who remembered God, and that they must die, and took pity on people; and there were dogs, — excuse the use of the term. But there was nothing worse than the *nachalniks*, or stewards, who had risen from serfdom. As it were, out of the mud, they became princes! And they made life worse than anything else.

There happened to be such a *prikashchik*, or overseer, on a proprietor's estate. The peasants worked their share for the estate. There was plenty of land, and the land was good, — there was water, and meadows, and woodland. There was enough, and to spare, for master and peasants; but the master made one of his house-serfs from another estate the overseer.

This overseer took the power into his hands, and sat upon the necks of the muzhiks. He himself had a family, — a wife, and two married daughters, — and he had made money. He might easily have lived without sin; but he was a covetous man, and fell into sin. He began to compel the muzhiks to work on the barin's estate more than their regular allotment. He started a brickyard; he wore out all the peasants, both women and men, and sold the bricks.

The muzhiks went to complain to the proprietor at Moscow, but they had no success. He dismissed the muzhiks without any satisfaction, and did not curb the overseer's power. The prikashchik learned that

the muzhiks had been to complain of him, and he began to vent his spite on them so that they were worse off than before. There happened to be false men among the muzhiks, who used to carry stories about one another. And all the people were in a ferment, and the overseer kept growing worse and worse.

As time went on, the overseer became so bad that the people came to fear him worse than a terrible wild beast. When he passed through the village, all would keep out of his way as from a wolf, hiding wherever they could, so as to keep away from his eyes. The overseer saw it; and the fact that they were afraid of him made him still fiercer. He persecuted the people, both by blows and hard work; and the muzhiks suffered terribly at his hands.

Sometimes such evil-doers were put out of the way, and the muzhiks began to plan this way of escape. They would meet in some retired spot, and the boldest among them would say: —

"Must we go on suffering forever from our persecutor? — We are lost anyhow — to kill such a man is no sin."

The muzhiks were at one time gathered in the forest; it was before Holy Week. The overseer had sent them out to clear up the proprietor's forest. They gathered at dinner, and began to talk.

"How can we live now?" they said. "He will destroy us root and branch. He tortures us with work; neither we nor the women have any rest day or night any more. The least thing not to his mind, and he finds fault, he lashes us. Semyon died under his whip. Anisim was tortured in the stocks. What else can we expect? He will come here this evening; he will be making trouble again; let's just pull him off from his horse, give him a blow with the ax, and that'll be the end of it. We'll bury him somewhere like a dog, and no one will be any wiser.[1] Only one condition: we must all stand together and not give it away."

Thus spoke Vasili Minayef. He was more than all

[1] *I konlsui f vodu*, literally, "the ends in the water."

the rest incensed against the prikashchik, for he had whipped him every week and robbed him of his wife, by taking her as his cook.

Thus talked the muzhiks; in the evening the overseer came; he was on horseback; as soon as he came, he began to find fault with their work. They had not cut the wood in the right way. He discovered a little linden in the pile.

He said, "I did not tell you to cut the lindens. Who cut it down? Confess, or I 'll flog you all!"

He began to inquire in whose pile the linden was. They told him it was Sidor's. The prikashchik beat Sidor's face till it bled. Then he lashed Vasili like a Tartar because his pile was small; then he started home.

In the evening the muzhiks met again, and Vasili was the spokesman.

"Ekh! What people you are! Not men, but sparrows. 'We 'll stand together, we 'll stand together!' but when it comes to the point, all rush under the pent-roof Thus sparrows try to fight a hawk: 'Don't give it away, don't give it away, we 'll stand together!' But when he swooped down on us, all scattered in the grass! And so the hawk caught the one he wanted, carried it off. The sparrows hopped out: '*Cheeveek! cheeveek!*' There is one missing! 'Who is gone?' Vanka, eh! 'That's his road, let him go! He deserves it.' The same way with you. If you are n't going to give it away, then don't give it away. When he seized Sidor, you should have clubbed together, and put an end to him. But still it is, 'Don't peach, don't peach! we 'll stand together!' But when he swooped down, all flew into the bushes!"

Thus they spoke more and more often, and at last the muzhiks determined to do away with the prikashchik. On Good Friday the overseer announced to the muzhiks that they must be ready to plow for the barin at Easter, so as to sow the oats. This seemed to the muzhiks an insult; and on Good Friday they gathered at Vasili's, in the back yard, and began to talk again.

"Since he has forgotten God," say they, "and wants to do such things, we must really kill him. We are ruined anyway."

Piotr Mikhyeyef also came with them. Piotr Mikhyeyef was a peace-loving muzhik, and did not agree with the others. Mikhyeyef came, heard their talk, and said: —

"You are meditating a great sin, brethren. To destroy a soul is a great crime. To destroy another man's soul is easy, but how about your own? He does wrong; it is bad for him. Brethren, we must bear it."

Vasili was angry at these words.

"He keeps repeating the same thing over and over," says he: "'It's a sin to kill a man! You know it is a sin to kill such a man,' says he. It is a sin to kill a good man, but even God has commanded to kill such a dog. You must kill a mad dog, out of pity for men; and not to kill him would be a greater sin. Why does he ruin people? But though we should suffer for it, we ought to do it for others. People will thank us. And to get rid of such spittle! He is ruining everybody. You talk nonsense, Mikhyeyitch. Why, it would be less of a sin than for all to go to work on Easter Sunday. You yourself would not go."

And Mikhyeyitch replied: —

"Why not go?" he asked. "They will send us, and I am going to plow. Not for myself. But God knows whose sin it is, only we should not forget Him. I, brethren," says he, "don't speak my own thoughts. If we had been commanded to do evil for evil, there would have been a law from God to that effect; but just the opposite is commanded us. You will do evil, but it will come back on you. It is not even clever to kill a man. His blood will stick in your soul. Kill a man — you stain your own soul with blood. You think, 'I have killed a bad man.' You think, 'I have destroyed a pest.' On the contrary, look, you have been led into doing a much worse sin to yourself. Yield to evil, and evil will yield to you."

And so the muzhiks did not agree; they were divided

by their thoughts. Some had the same opinion as Vasilyef; others coincided with the views of Piotr, that they should not attempt the sin, but bear it.

The muzhiks were celebrating the first of the holidays, which was Sunday. At evening the *starosta*, or village elder, came with attendants from the master's country-seat,[1] and said: —

"Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, the overseer, has given orders that all the muzhiks prepare on the morrow to plow in the oat-field."

The village elder went round with his attendants through the village, gave the orders for all to go out and plow the next day, calling to this one from over the river, this one from the highroad. The muzhiks wept, but dared not disobey. In the morning they went out with their wooden plows[2] and began to work.

At church the early morning mass was going on, the people everywhere else were celebrating the festival; but those muzhiks were plowing!

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, the overseer, woke up not very early, and went out on his place; his people — his wife and his widowed daughter, who had come for the festival — were dressed, and had on their finery; a laborer harnessed for them the little cart; they went off to mass and came home again; the serving-woman put on the samovar; Mikhaïl Semyonovitch came in, and they began their tea-drinking.

After Mikhaïl Semyonovitch had drunk enough tea, he lighted his pipe and called the village elder.

"Well, then, did you set the muzhiks to plowing?"

"I did, Mikhaïl Semyonovitch."

"What! did they all go?"

"All went; I myself set them at it."

"Setting them at work is all very well, but are they plowing? Go out and look, and tell them that I am coming after dinner to see if they have been plowing a desyatin to every two plows, and plowing it well, be-

[1] *Barsky dvor.* [2] *Sokhi.*

sides. If I find any mistake, I shan't hear to any festival."

"I will do so."

The village elder had started, but Mikhaïl Semyonovitch called him back; he hesitated, tried to say something, but could not.

He hesitated and hesitated, and at last he said: —

"Now, here, I want you to listen to what those villains are saying about me. Who is grumbling, and what they say, — tell me all about it. I know those villains; they don't like to work; all they care for is to be at their ease or go wandering about. They like to gormandize and have holidays, but they don't realize that if you put off the plowing it gets to be too late. So now, you just listen to what they say, and report it all to me. I must know about it. Go along and notice, and tell me all, and don't hide anything."

The village elder turned round, went off, mounted his horse, and rode off to the muzhiks in the field.

The overseer's wife had heard her husband's talk with the village elder, and came to her husband, and began to question him. She was a peace-loving woman, and kind-hearted. Where it was possible, she restrained her husband, and took the part of the muzhiks.

She came to her husband, and began to question him: —

"Mishenka,[1] my love," says she, "on the great day, the festival of the Lord, don't commit a sin; for Christ's sake, let the muzhiks off!"

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch did not heed his wife's words; he only began to laugh at her.

"It's a long time, isn't it," said he, "since you had a little taste of the whip, that you dare mix yourself up with other people's affairs?"

"Mishenka, my love, I had a bad dream about you; heed me; let the muzhiks off!"

"All right," said he; "I tell you, you've been living too high of late and think the whip won't reach you Look out!"

[1] Diminutive of Mikhaïl.

Semyonovitch got angry, thrust his lighted pipe into his wife's teeth, drove her away, and ordered his dinner brought.

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch ate some cold meat, a pirog, cabbage-soup with pork, roast shoat, vermicelli cooked in milk; he drank some cherry wine and tasted a sweet tart; then he called up the cook and set her to performing some songs, while he himself took his guitar and began to play the accompaniments.

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was sitting in a gay frame of mind, belching, thrumming on the strings, and jesting with the cook.

The village elder came in, bowed low, and began to report what he had seen in the field.

"How is it? are they plowing? Will they finish their stint?"

"They have already done more than half of the plowing."

"None left undone?"

"I did not see any; they plow very well; they are afraid."

"Well, does the ground break up well?"

"The ground breaks up easily, it is as soft as poppy seed."

The overseer was silent.

"Well, and what are they saying about me? do they revile me?"

The starosta began to stammer, but Mikhaïl Semyonovitch bade him tell the whole truth.

"Tell me everything; you won't be speaking your own words, but those of others. If you tell the truth, I will reward you; but if you deceive me, look out! I will pickle you! Hé, Katyusha,[1] give him a glass of vodka to keep his courage up."

The cook came and brought the starosta the brandy. He thanked her, drank it up, wiped his lips, and began to speak: —

"All the same," he said to himself, "'t is n't my fault

[1] Katyusha, diminutive of Katya, which is the diminutive of Katerina or Yekaterina, Catherine.

that they don't praise him. I will tell the truth, since he tells me to."

And the starosta plucked up courage, and began to speak: —

"They grumble, Mikhaïl Semyonovitch, they grumble."

"Yes; but what do they say? Tell me."

"They say one thing: 'He does not believe in God.'"

The overseer laughed: —

"Who says that?"

"They all say it. They say, 'He has sold himself to the devil.'"

The overseer laughed.

"That," says he, "is excellent; now tell me individually who says that. Does Vaska say so?"

The starosta did not want to tell on his own people, but there had been a quarrel between him and Vasili for a long time.

"Vasili," says he, "scolds worse than any one else."

"Yes; what does he say? Speak it out."

"But it is terrible even to tell it. He says, 'You won't escape a violent death.'"[1]

"Ay! the smart fellow! Why does he wait — why does n't he kill me? He can't because his arms are n't long enough to reach me! Just wait!" said he. "Vaska! we 'll be quits with you! Now, how about Tishka? That dog also, I suppose?"

"Yes; they all speak bad."

"Yes; but what do they say?"

"Well, they say something abominable."

"What was abominable? Don't be afraid to tell."

"Well, they say that your belly will break open, and your bowels gush out."

Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was delighted; he burst into a laugh.

"We will see whose does first! Who says that? Tishka?"

"No one said anything good; all growl, all are full of threats."

[1] *Bezpokayannaya smert;* literally, "an unrepentant death."

"Well, but how about Petrushka Mikheyef? What does he say? The gobbler! he reviles me, too, I suppose?"

"No, Mikhaïlo Semyonovitch. Piotr does not revile you."

"What does he do?"

"He is the only one of all the muzhiks that says nothing. He is a clever muzhik. I wondered at him, Mikhaïl Semyonuitch."

"But why?"

"At what he did; and all the muzhiks wondered at him."

"But what did he do?"

"Yes, it was very queer. I tried to get near him. He is plowing the sloping field on Turkin height. As I came near him, I heard him singing; he was carrying something gingerly, carefully; and on his plow, between the handles, something was shining."

"Well?"

"It was exactly like a little fire, shining. I went nearer and looked; it was a little wax candle — cost five kopeks — was stuck on to the cross-bar, and was lighted; and the wind did n't blow it out. And he, in his clean shirt, went up and down, plowing, and singing Sunday songs. And he turned back, and shook, and still the candle did n't go out. He shook it as I stood there, shifted the plowshare, lifted the plow, and all the time the candle was burning, and it did not go out."

"And what did he say?"

"Well, he did n't say anything; he only looked at me, gave me the Easter salutation,[1] and began to sing again."

"But what did you say to him?"

"I did not speak; but the muzhiks came up, and began to make sport of him; here they say, 'Mikhyeyitch, you will say enough prayers to atone for the sin of plowing on Easter Sunday.'"

[1] *Pokhristosovalsa;* a kiss with the exclamation *Khristos voskres*, Christ has arisen.

"What did he say to that?"

"He only said, '*On earth, peace, good-will to men.*' Then he took hold of the plow again, started up the horse, and sang in a low voice; but the candle burned, and did n't go out."

The overseer ceased to laugh, laid down the guitar, hung his head, and fell into thought.

He sat there, and sat there; then he sent out the cook and the starosta, and went behind the partition; lay down on the bed, and began to sigh, and groan, like a cart-load of sheaves going by. His wife came to him, began to talk with him; he gave her no reply. Only he said: —

"He has conquered me. Now it 's my turn."

His wife said to him: —

"Yes, go and let them off. Perhaps no harm is done. No matter what you have done, you have never feared before; what is there to be afraid of now?"

"I am lost," he said; "he has conquered me;" and he kept repeating, "He has conquered, conquered!"

His wife cried: —

"You keep repeating: 'He has conquered me, he has conquered me.' Go on! let the muzhiks off, then it will be all right. Go on, I will have the horse saddled."

They brought the horse; and the overseer's wife persuaded her husband to go out to the field and let the muzhiks go.

Mikhaïl Semyonuitch mounted his horse, and rode out to the field. He came to the inclosure; a peasant woman opened the gate for him; he rode into the village. As soon as the people saw him, they all hid themselves from him, one in a yard, another behind a corner, another in an orchard.

The overseer rode through the whole village; he came to the gates at the farther end. The gates were shut, and he could not open them on horseback. He shouted and shouted for some one to open them for him, but no one came. Getting down from his horse, he opened the gates himself, and tried to mount again from the gate-post. He lifted his foot to the stirrup,

lifted himself, and was just going to swing himself into the saddle, when the horse took fright at a pig, sprang against the paling; and the man was heavy; he did not reach the saddle, but was thrown on his belly against the paling. There was one sharp pole that stood out above the paling, and this was higher than the others. And he fell on his belly straight on this pole. And it ripped open his belly, and he fell on the ground.

The muzhiks were coming from the plowing; the horses snorted and refused to pass through the turn into the gates; the muzhiks looked to see what the matter was, and there Mikhaïl Semyonovitch was lying on his back, his arms stretched out, and his eyes fixed, and his insides had gushed out over the ground, and his blood made a pool — the earth would not drink it.

The muzhiks were frightened; they drove the horses in by another way; only Piotr Mikhyeyitch dismounted and went to the overseer, and, seeing that he was dead, closed his eyes, harnessed the telyega, helped the dead man's son to put him in a box, and carried him back to the manor-house.

The barin learned about all these things, and on account of the sin forgave the muzhiks their tax.

And the muzhiks learned that God's power works not by sin, but by goodness.

THE TWO OLD MEN

CHAPTER I

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.
Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.
Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.
Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.
But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." — JOHN iv. 19–23.

TWO aged men resolved to worship God in old Jerusalem. One was a rich muzhik; his name was Yefim Tarasuitch Shevelef: the other — Yeliseï Bodrof — was not a rich man.

Yefim was a sedate muzhik; he did not drink vodka, or smoke tobacco, or take snuff. All his life long he had never used a bad word, and he was a strict and upright man. He had served two terms as village elder[1] and had come out without a deficit.

He had a large family, — two sons and a married grandson, — and all lived together. As for himself, he was hale, long-bearded, erect, and, though he was in his seventh decade, his beard was only beginning to grow gray.

Yeliseï was a little old man, neither rich nor poor; in former times he had gone about doing jobs in carpentry; but now, as he grew old, he began to stay at home, and took to raising bees. One of his sons had

[1] The *starosta*, or *starshina*, is president of the village council, and is held accountable for the taxes levied on the *mir*, or commune.

gone away to work, the other was at home. Yeliseï was a good-natured and jolly man. He used to drink vodka, and take snuff, and he liked to sing songs; but he was a peaceable man, and lived amicably with his family and his neighbors. As to his person, Yeliseï was a short, darkish little muzhik, with a curly beard; and like his name-saint, Elisha the prophet, he was entirely bald.

The old men had long ago promised and agreed to go together, but Tarasuitch had never found the leisure; his engagements had never come to an end. As soon as one was through with, another began: first the grandson got married; then they expected the younger son from the army; and then, again, he was occupied in building a new izba.

One festival day the old men met, and sat down together on the timber.

"Well," says Yeliseï, "when shall we set out, and fulfil our promise?"

Yefim knit his brow.

"We must wait awhile," says he. "This year it'll come hard for me. I am engaged in building this izba. I counted on spending about a hundred rubles; but I'm already on the third, and it is n't finished yet. You see, that'll take till summer. In the summer, if God grants, we will go without let or hindrance."

"According to my idea," says Yeliseï, "we ought not to put it off; we ought to go to-day. It's the very time — spring."

"It is a good time certainly; but this work is begun: how can I leave it?

"Have n't you any one? Your son will attend to it."

"How attend to it? My eldest son is not to be trusted — he is given to drinking."

"We shall die, old friend; they'll have to live without us. Your son must learn."

"That's so; but I should like to see this job finished under my own eyes!"

"Ah! my dear man, you will never get all you want done. Only the other day, at my house, the women-

folks were cleaning house, fixing up for Easter. And both are necessary, but you 'd never get done. And my oldest daughter-in-law, a sensible woman, says, 'Thank the Lord,' says she, 'Easter is coming; it does n't wait for us, else,' says she, 'however much we did we should never get it all done.' "

Tarasuitch was lost in thought.

"I have put a good deal of money," says he, "into this building; and we can't go on this journey with empty hands. It won't take less than a hundred rubles."

Yeliseï laughed out: —

"Don't make a mistake, old friend," says he; "you have ten times as much property as I have. And you talk about money! Only say when shall we go? I have n't anything, but I 'll manage it."

Tarasuitch also smiled.

"How rich you seem!" says he; "but where will you get it?"

"Well, I shall scrape some up at home — that 'll be something; and for the rest, — I 'll let my neighbor have ten of my hives. He has been after them for a long time."

"This is going to be a good swarming-year; you 'll regret it."

"Regret it? No, old friend. I never regretted anything in my life except my sins. There is nothing more precious than the soul!"

"That 's so. But it 's not pleasant when things are n't right at home."

"But how will it be with us if our souls are not right? Then it will be worse. But we have made a vow — let us go! I beg of you, let us go!"

CHAPTER II

And Yeliseï persuaded his friend. Yefim thought about it, and thought about it; and in the morning he came to Yeliseï.

"Well, then, let us go," says he. "You are right. In death and in life, God rules. Since we are alive, and have strength, we must go."

At the end of a week the old men had made their preparations.

Tarasuitch had money in the house. He took one hundred rubles for his journey; two hundred he left for the old woman.

Yeliseï also was ready. He sold his neighbor the ten beehives. And the bees that would swarm from the ten hives, also, he sold to the neighbor. He received, all told, seventy rubles. The other thirty rubles he swept up as best he could. The old woman gave him all that she had saved up against her funeral; the daughter-in-law gave what she had.

Yefim Tarasuitch intrusted all his affairs to his oldest son, — he told him what meadows to rent, and where to put manure, and how to finish and roof in the izba. He thought about everything, he ordered how everything should be done.

But Yeliseï only directed his old woman to hive the young swarms of bees that he had sold, and give them to his neighbor without any trickery; but about household affairs, he did not have anything to say: —

"If anything comes up, light will be given what to do and how to do it. You people at home do as you think best."

The old men were now ready. The wives baked a lot of flat-cakes,[1] sewed some bags, cut new leg-wrappers;[2] they put on new boots, took some extra bast-shoes,[3] and set forth. The folks kept them company to the common pasture, bade them good-by, and the old men set out on their journey.

Yeliseï set out in good spirits, and, as soon as he left the village, he forgot all about his cares. His only thoughts were how to please his companion on the way, how not to say a single churlish word to any one, and

[1] *Lepyoshki.*
[2] *Onutchi*, strips of cloth used by the muzhiks instead of stockings.
[3] *Lapti.*

how to go in peace and love to the Places and return home. As he walked along the road, all the time he either whispered a prayer, or called to memory some saint's life which he knew. And if he met any one on the road, or came to any halting-place, he made himself as useful and as agreeable as possible to every one, and even said a word in God's service. He went on his way rejoicing. One thing Yelisei could not do. He intended to give up snuff-taking, and he left his snuff-box; but it was melancholy. A man on the road gave him some. And now and again he would drop behind his companion, so as not to lead him into temptation, and take a pinch of snuff.

Yefim Tarasuitch also got along well — sturdily; he fell into no sin and he said nothing churlish, but he was not easy in his mind. He could not get his household affairs out of his mind. He kept thinking of what was doing at home. Had he forgotten to give his son some commands? and was his son doing as he was told? If he saw any one by the road planting potatoes, or spreading manure, he would think, "Is my son doing what I told him?" He was almost ready to turn back and show him how, and even do it himself.

CHAPTER III

Five weeks the old men had been journeying; their home-made lapti were worn out, and they had been obliged to buy new ones; and they came to the land of the Top-Knots.[1]

From the time that they left home, they had paid for lodging and meals; but now that they had come among the Top-Knots, the people began to vie with each other in giving them invitations. They gave them shelter, and they fed them, and they would not take money from them, but even put bread, and sometimes flat-cakes, into their bags for the journey. Thus bravely the old

[1] *Khokhlachina*, Little Russia; a popular nickname for a Malo-Russian is *Khokhol*, tuft or top-knot. — Ed.

men journeyed seven hundred versts. They passed through still another government, and came to a famine-stricken place.

They received them kindly and took them in, and would not take pay for lodgings; but they could no longer feed them. And they did not always let them have bread; and, again, it was not always to be obtained at all for love or money. The year before, so the people said, nothing had grown. Those who were rich had been ruined, and forced to sell out; those who lived in medium circumstances had come down to nothing; but the poor had either gone away altogether, or had come upon the Mir, or had almost perished in their homes. All winter they had been living on husks and pigweed.

One time the old men put up at a little place; they bought fifteen pounds of bread; and, having spent the night, they started off betimes, so as to get as far as possible before the heat of the day. They went ten versts, and reached a little river; they sat down, filled their cups with water, moistened the little loaves, ate their luncheon, and changed their shoes. They sat some time resting. Yeliseï got out his little snuff-horn. Yefim Tarasuitch shook his head at him.

"Why," said he, "don't you throw away that nasty stuff?"

Yeliseï wrung his hands.

"The sin is too strong for me," said he; "what can I do?"

They got up, and went on their way. They went half a score of versts farther. They came to a great village; they went right through it. And already it had grown hot. Yeliseï was dead with fatigue; he wanted to rest, and have a drink, but Tarasuitch would not halt. Tarasuitch was the stronger in walking, and it was rather hard for Yeliseï to keep up with him.

"I 'd like a drink," says he.

"All right. Get a drink. I don't want any."

Yeliseï stopped.

"Don't wait," says he; "I 'm only going to run in for

a minute here at this hut, and get a drink. I 'll overtake you in a jiffy."

"All right."

And Yefim Tarasuitch proceeded on his way alone, and Yeliseï turned back to the hut.

Yeliseï went up to the hut. The hut was small, and plastered with mud; below it was black; above, white. The clay was peeling off; long, apparently, since it had been mended; and the roof in one place was broken through. The way to the hut led through a dvor or courtyard. Yeliseï went into the dvor and saw lying on the earth embankment a thin, beardless man, in shirt and drawers — in Little Russian fashion. The man evidently had laid himself down when it was cool, but now the sun was beating straight down upon him. And he lay there, and was not asleep. Yeliseï spoke to him and asked him for a drink. The man made no reply.

"Either he 's sick or he 's ugly," thought Yeliseï, and he went to the door. He heard a child crying in the hut. Yeliseï rapped with the ring: —

"Masters." [1]

No reply. He rapped again on the door with his staff: —

"Christians!" [2]

No one moved.

"Servants of God!"

No one answered. Yeliseï was about to proceed on his way, but he listened; some one seemed to be groaning behind the door.

"Can some misfortune have befallen these people? I must look and see."

And Yeliseï went into the hut.

CHAPTER IV

Yeliseï turned the ring — it was not fastened. He opened the door, and passed through the little vestibule. The door into the hut stood open; at the left was an oven; straight ahead was the front-room or "corner";

[1] *Khozyaeva.* [2] *Kreshchenuie;* literally, "Ye baptized!"

in the "corner" a shrine and a table; by the table a bench; on the bench, an old woman, in a single shirt, with disheveled hair, was sitting, resting her head on the table. At her elbow an emaciated little boy, pale as wax, with a distended belly, was tugging at the old woman's sleeve, and roaring at the top of his voice, asking for something.

Yeliseï went into the hut. In the hut the air was stifling; he looked around behind the oven: on the floor a woman was lying. She was lying on her back, and did not look up; only moaned, and sometimes stretched out her leg, sometimes drew it up again. And she threw herself from side to side, and the stench arising from her showed that she had soiled herself and no one had attended to her.

The old woman raised her head, and looked at the man.

"What do you want?" says she. "What do you want? We 've nothing for you." [1]

Yeliseï understood what she said; he went up to her. "I am a servant of God," says he; "I come to get a drink."

"Hain't got any, hain't got any. Hain't got anything to get it in. Go away!"

Yeliseï began to question her.

"Tell me, isn't there any one of you well enough to take care of the woman?"

"Hain't got any one — the man outside is dying, and here we are."

The boy had ceased crying when he saw the stranger; but when the old woman spoke, he began to tug again at her sleeve: "Bread, granny, bread!" and began screaming again.

Yeliseï was going to ask more questions of the old woman, when the muzhik came stumbling into the hut; he went along by the wall, and was going to sit on the bench, but failed of it, and fell into the room at the

[1] She speaks in the staccato Malo-Russian dialect: *Chovo tobi treba? .... Nye ma, Cholovitche, nitchovo! Tobi* for *tibye; ma* for *mui; cholovitche* for *chelovyek* (man).

threshold. And he did not try to get up: he tried to speak. He would speak one word — then break off, his breath failed him — then he would speak another: —

"Sick," .... said he, "and .... starving. .... Here .... he .... is .... dying .... starvation."

The muzhik indicated the boy with his head, and burst into tears.

Yeliseï shook off his sack from his shoulders, freed his arms, set the sack on the floor, then lifted it to the bench, and began to undo it. He undid it, took out bread, and a knife; then he cut off a slice, and offered it to the muzhik. The muzhik would not take it, but pointed to the boy and to the girl.

"Give it to them, please."

Yeliseï held it out to the boy. The boy smelt the bread, stretched himself up, seized the slice with both his little hands, and buried his nose in the slice. A little girl crept out from behind the oven, and stared at the bread. Yeliseï gave her some also. He cut off still another piece and gave it to the old woman. The old woman took it, and began to chew it.

"Would you bring some water?" she said; "their mouths are parched. I tried," says she, "yesterday, or to-day, — I don't remember which, — to get some. I fell, and could n't get there; and the bucket is there yet, unless some one has stolen it."

Yeliseï asked where their well was. The old woman gave him the directions. Yeliseï went and found the bucket, brought water, gave the people some to drink.

The children were still eating the bread and drinking the water, and the old woman ate some too; but the muzhik refused to eat.

"It makes me sick at my stomach."

His wife, who did not notice anything at all, or come to herself, only tossed about on the boards.

Yeliseï went to the village, bought at the shop some millet, salt, flour, butter, and looked round for a hatchet. He split up some wood, — began to kindle a fire in the oven. The little girl began to help him. Yeliseï boiled some porridge and kasha, and fed the people.

CHAPTER V

THE muzhik ate a little, and the old woman ate a little; but the little girl and the little boy licked the bowl clean, and lay down to sleep locked in each other's arms.

The muzhik and the old woman began to relate how all this had come upon them.

"We were n't rich, even before this," said they; "but when nothing grew, we had to give all we had for food last autumn. We parted with everything; then we had to go begging among our neighbors and kind people. At first they gave to us, but then they sent us away. Some would have gladly given to us, but they had nothing. Yes, and we were ashamed to beg; we got in debt to every one, both for money and flour and bread. I tried to get work," said the muzhik, "but there was no work. People everywhere were wandering about to work for something to eat. You 'd work one day, and you 'd go about for two hunting for work. The old woman and the little girl had to go a long way off begging. Not much was given them; no one had any bread to spare. And so we lived, hoping we should get along somehow till new crops came. But since spring they stopped giving at all, and then sickness came on. Things were just as bad as they could be. One day we had something to eat, but the next two nothing. We began to eat herbs. Yes, perhaps it was from eating herbs, or something of the sort, that my wife got sick. My wife became sick, and I have no strength," said the muzhik. "There was no way of curing us."

"I was the only one," said the old woman, "who kept up; but without eating, I lost my strength, and got puny. And the little girl got puny, and lost heart. We sent her to the neighbors, but she would n't go. She crept into the corner, and would n't come out. Day before yesterday a neighbor came round, yes, and she saw that we were starving, and were sick; but she turned round and went off. But her own husband had left her,

and she had n't anything to feed her little children with. .... And so here we lay, — waiting for death."

Yeliseï listened to their talk, and changed his mind about going to rejoin his companion that day, and he spent the night there.

In the morning Yeliseï got up, did the chores as if he were master of the house. He and the old woman kneaded the bread, and he lighted the fire in the oven. He went with the little girl to the neighbors', to get what they needed; for there was nothing to be found — nothing at all: everything had been disposed of; there was nothing for domestic purposes, and no clothing. And Yeliseï began to lay in a supply of what was needed. Some he himself made, and some he bought. Thus Yeliseï spent one day, spent a second, spent also a third.

The little boy got better, began to climb up on the bench, to caress Yeliseï. But the little girl became perfectly gay, and helped in everything. And she kept trotting after Yeliseï: "Grand-dad, dear little grand-daddy!" [1]

And the old woman also got up, and went to her neighbor's house. And the muzhik began to walk, supporting himself by the wall. Only the peasant's wife lay unconscious; but even she, on the third day, came to herself, and began to ask for something to eat.

"Well," thinks Yeliseï, "I did n't expect to spend so much time; now I 'll be going."

CHAPTER VI

On the fourth day, meat-eating was allowed for the first time after the fast; and Yeliseï said to himself: —

"Come, now, I will feast with these people. I will buy them something for the Saints' day,[2] and toward evening I will go."

Yeliseï went to the village again, bought milk, white

[1] *Didu, didusyu*, Malo-Russian for *dyedya, dyedushka*.
[2] St. Peter and St. Paul; July 11 (June 29, O.S.).

flour, lard. He and the old woman boiled and baked; and in the morning Yeliseï went to mass, and when he came back, he ate meat with the people. On this day the wife also got up, and began to creep about. And the muzhik had shaved, put on a clean shirt, — the old woman had washed it out, — and gone to the village to ask mercy of a rich muzhik. Both meadow and corn-land had been mortgaged to the rich muzhik. So he went to ask if he would not give him back the meadow and corn-land till the new crops.

The husband returned toward evening, gloomy and in tears. The rich muzhik would not have pity on him. He said: —

"Bring your money."

Again Yeliseï falls into thought.

"How will he live now?" thinks he. "The men will be going out to mow; he has nothing. His hay-field is mortgaged. The rye is ripening; the men are beginning to harvest it (our good mother earth[1] has done well for us this year), but these people won't have anything: their field has been mortgaged to the rich muzhik. If I go away, they'll be in trouble again."

And Yeliseï was much troubled by these thoughts, and did not take his departure that evening; he waited till morning. He went outdoors to sleep. He said his prayers and lay down, but he could not sleep.

"I must go — here I have been spending so much money and time — and I'm sorry for these people. You can't give to everybody, evidently. I meant to get them some water, and give them a slice of bread; but just see how it has taken me! Now — I must redeem their meadow and their field. And when I've redeemed their field, I must buy a cow for the children, and a horse to carry the muzhik's sheaves. There you are in a pretty pickle, brother Yeliseï Kuzmitch! You're anchored here, and you don't get off so easy!"

Yeliseï got up, took his kaftan from under his head, unfolded it, found his snuff-horn, took a pinch of snuff, tried to clear up his thoughts; but no, he thought and

[1] *Khorosha matushka.*

he thought, but could not think it out. He must go; but he pitied these people. And what to do, he knew not. He folded up his kaftan for a pillow, and lay down again. He lay and he lay, and the cocks were already singing when he finally fell into a doze.

Suddenly, something seemed to wake him up. He saw himself, as it were, all dressed, with his sack and his staff; and he had to go through a gate, but the gate was so nearly shut that only one person could get through at a time. And he went to the gate, and got caught on one side by his sack; he tried to detach it, and got caught on the other side by his leg-wrapper; and the leg-wrapper untied. He tried to detach it, but after all it was not the wattle which detained him, but the little girl holding him, and crying, "Grand-dad, dear little grand-daddy, bread!"[1] He looked down at his leg, and the little boy was clinging to his leg-wrapper; the old woman and the muzhik were gazing from the window.

Yeliseï woke up, and said to himself aloud, "To-morrow," said he, "I will redeem the field and the meadow; and I will buy a horse, and flour enough to last till the new comes; and I will buy a cow for the children. For otherwise I should go across the sea to find Christ, and lose Him in my own soul. I must set these people right."

And Yeliseï slept till morning.

Yeliseï woke up early. He went to the rich muzhik; he redeemed the rye-field; he paid cash for it, and for the meadow-land. He bought a scythe, — the very one that had been disposed of, and brought it back. He sent the muzhik to mow, and he himself went round among the muzhiks; at last found a horse and telyega which an innkeeper was ready to sell. He struck a bargain and bought them. He bought, also, some flour, put the sack in the telyega, and went farther to buy a cow. Yeliseï was going along; he overtook two Top-Knots. They were women; and they were gossiping as they walked. And Yeliseï heard the women talking

[1] *Didu, didusyu, khliba. Khliba,* Malo-Russian for *khlyeba.*

in their own speech, and he made out that they were talking about him.

"Heavens! at first they did n't know what to make of him; their idea was, he was a mere man. As he came by, it seems, he stopped to get a drink, and then he stayed. Whatever they needed, he bought. I myself saw him this very day buy of the tavern-keeper a nag and cart.[1] Did n't know there were such folks in the world. Must go and see him!"

Yeliseï heard this, understood that they were praising him, and did not go to buy the cow. He returned to the tavern, and paid the money for the horse. He harnessed up, and drove with the wheat back to the hut. He drove up to the gate, reined in, and dismounted from the telyega. The household saw the horse; they wondered. And it occurred to them that he had bought the horse for them, but they dared not say so. The husband came out to open the gate.

"Where," says he, "did you get the nag, grandpa?"

"I bought it," says he. "I got it cheap. Mow a little grass, please, for the stall, for her to lie on over night. Yes, and fetch in the bag."

The husband unharnessed the horse, fetched the bag into the house; then he mowed a lot of grass and spread it in the stall. They went to bed. Yeliseï lay down out-of-doors, and there he had brought out his sack the evening before. All the folks were asleep. Yeliseï got up, shouldered his sack, fastened his leg-wrappers, put on his kaftan, and started on his way after Yefim.

CHAPTER VII

Yeliseï had gone five versts and it began to grow light. He sat down under a tree, opened his sack, and began to reckon. He counted his money: there were left only seventeen rubles, twenty kopeks.

"Well," said he to himself, "with this I shan't get across the sea. And to beg in Christ's name — that

[1] *Voz*, Malo-Russian for *telyega*.

might be a great sin. Friend Yefim will go alone; he 'll set a candle for me. But the vow will remain on me till death. Thank the Lord, the Master is kind; He will have patience."

Yeliseĭ got up, lifted his sack up on his shoulders, and went back. Only, he went out of his way round the village, so that the people of it might not see him. And Yeliseĭ reached home quickly. When he started, it seemed hard to him, beyond his strength, to keep up with Yefim; but, going back, God gave him such strength that he walked along and did not know fatigue. He walked along gayly, swinging his staff, and made his seventy versts a day.

Yeliseĭ reached home. Already the fields had been harvested. The folks were delighted to see their old man; they began to ask him questions,— how, and what, and why he had left his companion, why he did not go on, but came home. Yeliseĭ did not care to tell them about it.

"God did not permit me," says he. "I spent my money on the road, and fell behind my companion. And so I did not get there. Forgive me for Christ's sake."

And he handed the old woman what money he had left. Yeliseĭ inquired about the domestic affairs: it was all right; everything had been done properly; there was nothing left undone in the farm-work, and all were living in peace and harmony.

On this very same day, Yefim's people heard that Yeliseĭ had returned; they came round to ask after their old man. And Yeliseĭ told them the same thing.

"Your old man," says he, "went on sturdily; we parted," says he, "three days before Peter's Day; I intended to catch up with him, but then so many things happened: I spent my money, and, as I could n't go on with what I had, I came back."

The people wondered how such a sensible man could have done so foolishly — start out, and not go on, and only waste his money. They wondered and forgot. And Yeliseĭ thought no more about it. He began to do

the chores again; he helped his son chop wood against the winter; he threshed the corn with the women; he rethatched the shed, arranged about the bees, and gave his neighbor the ten hives with their increase. His old woman wanted to hide how many swarms had come from the hives that he had sold; but Yeliseï himself knew what hives had swarmed and what had not; and he gave his neighbor, instead of ten, seventeen swarms. Yeliseï arranged everything, sent his son off to work, and he himself settled down for the winter to make bast-shoes and chisel out beehives.

CHAPTER VIII

All that day when Yeliseï was staying in the sick folks' hut, Yefim waited for his companion. He went on a little way, and sat down. He waited and waited, and finally went to sleep; he woke up, and still sat there; no companion! He gazed with all his eyes. Already the sun had gone behind the trees — no Yeliseï.

"He can't have gone past me, or ridden by, — perhaps some one gave him a lift, — and not seen me while I was asleep, can he? He could not have helped seeing me. You see a long way on the steppes. If I should go back," he said to himself, "he would be getting ahead. We might miss each other; that would be still worse. I will go on; we shall meet at our lodging."

He went on to a village, asked the village policeman to send such and such an old man, if he came along, to yonder hut.

Yeliseï did not come to the lodging.

Yefim went farther; asked everybody if they had seen a bald, little old man. No one had seen him. Yefim wondered, and went on alone.

"We shall meet," he said to himself, "in Odessa somewhere, or on board ship."

And he ceased to think about it.

On the way he met a strannik.[1] The strannik wore a

[1] A professional pilgrim, of the genus tramp.

skullcap and cassock, and had long hair; had been to the Athos Monastery, and was going to Jerusalem for the second time. They met at the lodgings, got into conversation, and went on together.

They reached Odessa safely. They waited thrice twenty-four hours for a ship. Many pilgrims were waiting there. They were from different lands. Again Yefim made inquiries about Yeliseï; no one had seen him.

Yefim asked for a passport; it cost five rubles. He paid forty silver rubles for a return ticket; bought bread and herring for the voyage. The vessel was loaded, the pilgrims embarked; Tarasuitch also took his place with the strannik. They hoisted anchor, set sail, flew across the sea. They sailed well all day; at evening a wind sprang up, rain fell; it began to get rough, and the waves dashed over the ship. The people were thrown about, women began to scream, and the weaker among the men began to run about the vessel, trying to find a place.

Fear fell upon Yefim also, but he did not show it. Exactly where he had sat down on coming on board, near some old men from Tambof, here also he kept sitting all night and all the next day; they only clung to their sacks, and said nothing. It cleared off on the third day. On the fifth day they reached Tsargrad.[1] Some of the stranniks were put ashore; they wanted to look at the temple of Sophia-Wisdom, where now the Turks hold sway. Tarasuitch did not land, but still sat on board. Only he bought some white loaves. They stayed twenty-four hours; again they flew over the sea. They made another stop at the city of Smyrna; at another city, Alexandria; and they happily reached the city of Jaffa. At Jaffa all the pilgrims disembarked. It was seventy versts on foot to Jerusalem. Also at landing, the people were panic-stricken; the ship was high and the people had to jump down into boats; and the boat rocked, and there was danger that one might not strike it, but might fall in alongside; and two men were drenched, but all were landed happily.

[1] Constantinople, the *Tsar-city*.

They landed and started off on foot. On the third day after landing they reached Jerusalem. They established themselves in the city at the Russian hostelry;[1] their passports were inscribed; they ate their dinner; then Yefim and the strannik went to the Holy Places. But to the Lord's sepulcher itself there was no longer any admittance.

They went to the Patriarchal Monastery; there all the worshipers collected; the women all sat down in one place, the men also sat down in another place. They were bidden to take off their shoes, and to sit in a circle. A monk came in with a towel, and began to wash all their feet: he washed them, wiped them, and kissed them; and thus he did to all. He washed Yefim's feet, and kissed them.

They attended vespers and matins: they said their prayers, they placed candles, and presented prayers for their parents. And here also they were given something to eat, and wine was brought.

In the morning they went to the cell of Mary of Egypt, where she made her refuge. They set up candles, sang a Te Deum. Thence they went to the Monastery of Abraham. They saw the garden on Mount Moriah — the place where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son to God. Then they went to the place where Christ revealed himself to Mary Magdalene, and to the Church of James the brother of the Lord.

The strannik pointed out all these places, and always told where it was necessary to contribute money. They returned for dinner to the hostelry; and after dinner,

[1] The five or six thousand Russian pilgrims who every year visit Jerusalem, says a recent traveler, "are all accommodated in the extensive premises belonging to the Russian Government, in the center of which the Russian Consulate is situated, and which forms a sort of Russian suburb to the Holy City." Mr. Oliphant quotes a correspondent of the *Daily News* to the effect that the "Orthodox Palestine Society, one of whose tasks it is to facilitate Russian pilgrimage to the Holy Land," has a membership of more than six hundred members, a reserve capital of sixty thousand rubles, and a Grand Duke — the uncle of the Tsar — as its president. It is a curious question how long religious fanatics will be able to impose the "pious frauds" of the religious places upon credulous pilgrims, such as Yefim Tarasuitch. — ED.

just as they were getting ready to go to bed, the strannik began to groan, to shake his clothes, and to search. "I have been robbed," he says, "of my *portmonet*, with my money. Twenty-three rubles," said he, "there was in it — two ten-ruble notes, and three in change." The strannik mourned, mourned; nothing to be done: they lay down to sleep.

CHAPTER IX

YEFIM lay down to sleep, and temptation fell upon him.

"The strannik's money was not stolen," he said to himself; "he did n't have any. He never gave any. He told me where to give, but he himself did not give; yes, and he borrowed a ruble of me."

Thus Yefim argued, and then began to scold himself.

"Why," said he, "do I judge the man? I do wrong. I won't think about it."

As he grew sleepy, again he began to think how sharp the strannik was about money, and what an unlikely story he told about his *portmonet* having been stolen. "He had n't any money," he said to himself. "It was a trick."

Next morning they got up, and went to early mass in the great Church of the Resurrection; to the tomb of the Lord. The strannik did not leave Yefim; he went with him everywhere.

They went to the church. A great crowd of people were collected together, of pilgrim-stranniks, Russians, and all peoples — of Greeks and Armenians, and Turks and Syrians. Yefim entered the sacred gates with the people. A monk led them. He led them past Turkish guards to the place where the Saviour was taken from the cross and anointed, and where the nine great candlesticks were burning. He pointed out everything, and told them everything. Here Yefim placed a candle. Then some monks led Yefim to the right hand up the little flight of steps to Golgotha, where the cross stood.

Here Yefim said a prayer. Then they pointed out to Yefim the hole where the earth had opened down to hell; then they pointed out the place where they had fastened Christ's hands and feet to the cross; then they showed the tomb of Adam, over whose bones Christ's blood had flowed; then they came to the stone whereon Christ had sat when they put on him the crown of thorns; then to the pillar to which they bound Christ when they scourged him; then Yefim saw the stone with two hollows for Christ's feet. They were going to show them something more, but the crowd were in a hurry; they all rushed to the very grotto of the Lord's sepulcher. There the foreign mass had just ended, the orthodox mass was just beginning. Yefim went into the grotto with the throng.

He was anxious to get rid of the strannik, for continually in his thoughts he was sinning against the strannik: but the strannik would not be got rid of; in company with him he went to mass at the Lord's sepulcher. They tried to get nearer; they did not get there in time. The people were wedged so close that there was no going forward or back. Yefim stood, gazed forward, said his prayers; but it was of no use;[1] he kept feeling whether his purse was still there. He was divided in his thoughts: one moment he imagined the strannik was deceiving him; the next he thought: —

"Or, if he is not deceiving me, and he was really robbed, why, then, it might be the same with me also."

CHAPTER X

Thus Yefim stood, and said his prayers, and looked forward toward the chapel where the sepulcher itself is; and on the sepulcher the thirty-six lamps were burning. Yefim stood, looked over the heads, when, what a marvel! Under the lamps themselves, where the blessed fire was burning before all, he saw a little old man standing, in a coarse kaftan, with a bald spot over his whole head, just as in the case of Yeliseï Bodrof.

[1] *N'yet, n'yet.* Literally, "no, no."

"It 's like Yeliseï," he thinks. "But it can't be him. He can't have got here before I did. No vessel had sailed for a week before us. He could n't have got in ahead. And he was n't on our vessel. I saw all the pilgrims."

While Yefim was thus reasoning, the little old man began to pray; and he bowed three times — once straight ahead, toward God, and then toward the orthodox throng on both sides. And as the little old man bent down his head to the right, then Yefim recognized him. It was Bodrof himself, with his blackish, curly beard, growing gray on the cheeks; and his eyebrows, and eyes, and nose, and all his peculiarities. It was Yeliseï Bodrof himself.

Yefim was filled with joy because his companion had come, and he wondered how Yeliseï had got there ahead of him.

"Well, well, Bodrof," he said to himself, "how did he get up there in front? He must have fallen in with somebody who put him there. Let me just meet him as we go out; I 'll get rid of this strannik in his skullcap, and go with him, and perhaps he will get me a front place too."

And all the time Yefim kept his eyes on Yeliseï, so as not to miss him.

Now the mass was over; the crowd reeled, they tried to make their way, they struggled; Yefim was pushed to one side. Again the fear came on him that some one would steal his purse.

Yefim clutched his purse, and tried to break through the crowd, so as to get into an open space. He made his way into the open space; he walked and walked, he sought and sought for Yeliseï,[1] and in the church also. And there, also, in the church he saw many people in cloisters; and some were eating, and drinking wine, and sleeping, and reading. And there was no Yeliseï anywhere. Yefim returned to the hostelry, but he did not find his companion. And that evening the strannik also did not come back. He disappeared, and did not return the ruble. Yefim was left alone.

[1] *Khodil-khodil, iskal-iskal Yeliseya.*

On the next day Yefim again went to the Lord's sepulcher, with an old man from Tambof, who had come on the same ship with him. He wanted to get to the front, but again he was crowded back; and he stood by a pillar, and prayed. He looked to the front: again under the lamps, at the very sepulcher of the Lord, in the foremost place, stood Yeliseï, spreading his arms like the priest at the altar; and the light shone all over his bald head.

"Well," thinks Yefim, "now I 'll surely not miss him."

He tried to push through to the front. He pushed through. No Yeliseï! Apparently he had gone out.

And on the third day, again he gazed toward the Lord's sepulcher: in the same sacred spot stood Yeliseï, with the same aspect, his arms outspread, and looking up, almost as if his eyes were fixed upon him. And the bald spot on his whole head shone.

"Well," thinks Yefim, "now I 'll not miss him; I 'll go and stand at the door. There we shan't miss each other."

Yefim went and stood and stood. He stood there half the day; all the people went out — no Yeliseï.

Yefim spent six weeks in Jerusalem, and went everywhere; and in Bethlehem, and Bethany, and on the Jordan; and he had a seal stamped on a new shirt at the Lord's sepulcher, so that he might be buried in it; and he got some Jordan water in a vial, and some earth; and he bought some candles with the holy fire, and he had the prayer for the dead registered in the eight places; and having spent all his money, except enough to get him home, Yefim started on the home journey. He went to Jaffa, took passage in a ship, sailed to Odessa, and from there proceeded to walk home.

CHAPTER XI

Yefim walked alone over the same road as before. As he began to near his home, again the worriment came upon him as to how his folks were getting along without him.

"In a year," thinks he, "much water leaks away. You spend a whole lifetime making a house, and it does n't take long to go to waste."

How had his son conducted affairs in his absence? how had the spring opened up? how had the cattle weathered the winter? how had they finished the izba?

Yefim reached that place where, the year before, he had parted from Yeliseï. It was impossible to recognize the people. Where, the preceding year, there had been wretched poverty, now all were living in sufficient comfort. There had been good crops. The people had recovered and forgotten their former trouble.

One evening Yefim reached the very village where, the year before, Yeliseï had stopped. He had hardly entered the village, when a little girl in a white shirt sprang out from behind a hut: —

"Grandpa! Dear grandpa![1] Come into our house!"

Yefim was inclined to go on, but the little girl would not let him; she seized him by the skirts, pulled him along into the hut, and laughed.

There came out on the doorsteps a woman with a little boy; she also beckoned to him: "Come in, please, grandsire, *d'yedushko*, — and take supper with us, — you shall spend the night."

Yefim went in.

"All right," he said to himself; "I will ask about Yeliseï. I believe this is the very hut where he stopped to get a drink."

Yefim went in; the woman took his sack from him, gave him a chance to wash, and set him at the table. She put on milk, vareniki,[2] kasha-gruel, — she set them all on the table. Tarasuitch thanked and praised the people for being so hospitable to pilgrims. The woman shook her head: —

"We cannot help being hospitable to pilgrims. We owe our lives to a pilgrim. We lived, we had forgotten God, and God had forgotten us, so that all that we

[1] *Did! didko.* Malo-Russian for *D'yed, d'yedushka.*

[2] A sort of triangular doughnuts, or dumplings, stuffed with cheese or curds.

expected was death. Last summer it went so bad with us that we were all flat on our backs,—we had nothing to eat,—oh, how sick we were! And we should have died; but God sent us such a nice old man, just like you! He came in just at noon to get a drink; and when he saw us, he was sorry for us, yes, and he stayed on with us. And he gave us something to drink, and fed us, and put us on our legs; and he bought back our land, and he bought us a horse and cart and left them with us."

The old woman came into the hut; she took the woman's story out of her mouth.

"And we don't know at all," said she, "whether it was a man, or an angel of God. He loved us all so, and he was so sorry for us; and he went away without saying anything, and we don't know who we should pray God for. I can see it now just as it was; there I was lying expecting to die; I see a little old man come in .... not a bit stuck up .... rather bald .... he asks for water. Sinner that I was, I thought, 'What is he prowling round here for?' And think what he did! As soon as he saw us, he took off his sack, and set it right down on that spot, and untied it."

And the little girl broke in.

"No," says she, "babushka; first he set his sack right in the middle of the hut, and then he put it on the bench."

And they began to discuss it, and to recall all his words and actions; both where he sat, and where he slept, and what he did, and what he said to any of them.

At nightfall came the muzhik on horseback; he, also, began to tell about Yeliseï, and how he had stayed with them.

"If he had not come to us," says he, "we should all have died in our sins. We were perishing in despair; we murmured against God and against men. But he set us on our feet; and through him we learned to know God, and we have come to believe that there are good people. Christ save him! Before, we lived like cattle; he made us human beings again."

The people fed Yefim, giving him all he wanted to drink; they settled him for the night, and they themselves lay down to sleep.

But Yefim was unable to sleep; and the thought would not leave his mind, how he had seen Yeliseï in Jerusalem three times in the foremost place.

"That 's how he got there before me," he said to himself. "My labors may, or may not, be accepted; but the Lord has accepted his."

In the morning the people wished Yefim good speed; they loaded him with pirozhki for his journey, and they went to their work; and Yefim started on his way.

CHAPTER XII

YEFIM had been gone exactly a year. In the spring he returned home.

He reached home in the evening. His son was not at home; he was at the tavern. His son came home tipsy. Yefim began to question him. In all respects he saw that the young man had got into bad ways during his absence. He had spent all the money badly, he had neglected things. The father began to reprimand him. The son began to be impudent.

"You yourself might have stirred about a little," says he, "but you went wandering. Yes, and you took all the money with you besides, and then you call me to account!"

The father grew angry, and beat his son.

In the morning Yefim Tarasuitch started for the starosta's to talk with him about his son; he passed by Yeliseï's dvor. Yeliseï's old woman was standing on the doorsteps; she greeted him.

"How 's your health, neighbor?" said she; "did you have a good pilgrimage?"

Yefim Tarasuitch stopped.

"Glory to God," says he, "I have got back! I lost your old man, but I hear he is at home!"

And the old woman began to talk. She was very fond of prattling.

"He got back," says she, "good neighbor; he got back long ago. Very soon after the Assumption. And glad enough we were that God brought him. It was lonely for us without him. He is n't good for much work — his day is done; but he is the head, and we are happier. And how glad our lad was! 'Without father,' says he, 'it 's like being without light in the eye.' It was lonely for us without him; we love him and we missed him so!"

"Well, is he at home now?"

"Yes, friend, he 's with the bees: he 's hiving the new swarms. Splendid swarms! such a power of bees God never gave, as far as my old man remembers. God does n't grant according to our sins, he says. Come in, neighbor; how glad he 'll be to see you!"

Yefim passed through the vestibule, through the yard, to the apiary, where Yeliseï was. He went into the apiary, he looked — there was Yeliseï standing under a little birch tree, without a net, without gloves, in his gray kaftan, spreading out his arms, and looking up; and the bald spot over his whole head gleamed just as when he stood in Jerusalem at the Lord's sepulcher; and over him, just as in Jerusalem the candles burned, the sunlight played through the birch tree; and around his head the golden bees were circling, flying in and out, and they did not sting him.

Yefim stood still.

Yeliseï's old woman called to her husband.

"Our neighbor 's come," says she.

Yeliseï looked around, was delighted, and came to meet his companion, calmly detaching the bees from his beard.

"How are you, comrade, how are you, my dear friend! — did you have a good journey?"

"My feet went on the pilgrimage, and I have brought you some water from the river Jordan. Come .... you shall have it .... but whether the Lord accepted my labors .... "

"Well, glory to God, Christ save us!"

Yefim was silent for a moment.

"My legs took me there, but whether it was my soul that was there or another's...."

"That is God's affair, comrade, God's affair."

"On my way back I stopped also.... at the hut where you left me...."

Yeliseï became confused; he hastened to repeat:—

"It's God's affair, comrade, God's affair. What say you? shall we go into the izba?—I will bring you some honey."

And Yeliseï changed the conversation; he spoke about domestic affairs.

Yefim sighed, and did not again remind Yeliseï of the people in the hut, and the vision of him that he had seen in Jerusalem.

And he learned that in this world God bids every one do his duty till death—in love and good deeds.

TEXTS FOR WOODCUTS

(1885)

THE DEVIL'S PERSISTENT, BUT GOD IS RESISTANT[1]

THERE lived in olden times a good master.[2] He had plenty of everything, and many slaves served him. And the slaves used to praise their master.[3] They said: —

"There is not a better master under heaven, than ours. He not only feeds us and clothes us well, and gives us work according to our strength, but he never insults any of us, and never gets angry with us; he is not like other masters, who treat their slaves worse than cattle, and put them to death whether they are to blame or not, and never say a kind word to them. Our master wishes us well, and treats us kindly, and says kind things to us. We could n't have a better life than ours."

Thus the slaves praised their master.

And here the Devil began to get vexed because the slaves lived in comfort and love with their master.

And the Devil got hold of one of this master's slaves named Alyeb. He got hold of him and commanded him to entice the other slaves.

And when all the slaves were taking their rest, and were praising their master, Alyeb raised his voice, and said: —

"It 's all nonsense your praising our master's goodness. Try to humor the Devil, and the Devil will be good. We serve our master well, we humor him in all things. As soon as he thinks of anything, we do it;

[1] *Vrazhye Lyepko a Bozhye Kryepko.*
[2] *Khozyaïn.* [3] *Gospodin*, Lord.

we divine his thoughts. How make him be not good to us? Just stop humoring him, and do bad work for him, and he will be like all the others, and he will return evil for evil worse than the crossest of masters."

And the other slaves began to argue with Alyeb. And they argued, and laid a wager. Alyeb undertook to make their kind master angry. He undertook it on the condition that, if he did not make him angry, he should give his holiday clothes; but if he should make him angry, then they agreed to give him, each one of them, their holiday clothes; and, moreover, they agreed to protect him from their master, if he should be put in irons, or, if thrown in prison, to free him. They laid the wager, and Alyeb promised to make their master angry the next morning.

Alyeb served his master in the sheep-cote; he had charge of the costly breeding-rams.

And here in the morning the good master came with some guests to the sheep-cote, and began to show them his beloved, costly rams. The Devil's accomplice winked to his comrades: —

"Look! I'll soon get the master angry."

All the slaves had gathered. They peered in at the door and through the fence; and the Devil climbed into a tree, and looked down into the dvor, to see how his accomplice would do his work.

The master came round the dvor, showed his guests his sheep and lambs, and then was going to show his best ram.

"The other rams," says he, "are good; but this one here, the one with the twisted horns, is priceless; he is more precious to me than my eyes."

The sheep and rams were jumping about the dvor to avoid the people, and the guests were unable to examine the valuable ram. This ram would scarcely come to a stop before the Devil's accomplice, as if accidentally, would scare the sheep, and again they would get mixed up.

The guests were unable to make out which was the priceless ram.

Here the master became tired. He said: —

"Alyeb, my dear, just try to catch the best ram with the wrinkled horns, and hold him. Be careful."

And, as soon as the master said this, Alyeb threw himself, like a lion, amid the rams, and caught the priceless ram by the wool. He caught him by the wool, and instantly grabbed him with one hand by the left hind leg, lifted it up, and, right before the master's eyes, bent his leg, and it cracked like a dry stick. Alyeb broke the precious ram's leg below the knee. The ram bleated, and fell on his fore knees. Alyeb grabbed him by the right leg; but the left turned inside out, and hung down like a whip. The guests and all the slaves groaned, and the Devil rejoiced when he saw how cleverly Alyeb had done his job.

The master grew darker than night, frowned, hung his head, and said not a word. The guests and slaves were also silent. .... They waited to see what would happen.

The master kept silent awhile; then he shook himself, as if trying to throw off something, and raised his head, and turned his eyes heavenward. Not long he gazed before the wrinkles on his brow disappeared; he smiled, and fixed his eyes on Alyeb. He looked at Alyeb, smiled again, and said: —

"O Alyeb, Alyeb! Thy master told thee to make me angry. But my master is stronger than thine, and thou hast not led me into anger; but I shall make thy master angry. Thou wert afraid that I would punish thee, and hast wished to be free, Alyeb. Know, then, that thy punishment will not come from me; but as thou art anxious for thy freedom, here, in the presence of my guests, I give thee thy freedom. Go wherever it may please thee,[1] and take thy holiday clothes."

And the kind master went back to the house with his guests. But the Devil gnashed his teeth, fell from the tree, and sank through the earth.

[1] Literally, "to all four sides or directions."

LITTLE GIRLS WISER THAN THEIR ELDERS

EASTER was early. Folks had just ceased going in sledges. The snow still lay in the courtyards, and little streams ran through the village. In an alley between two dvors a large pool had collected from the dung-heaps. And near this pool were standing two little girls from either dvor, — one of them younger, the other older.

The mothers of the two little girls had dressed them in new sarafans, — the younger one's blue, the elder's of yellow flowered damask. Both wore red handkerchiefs. The little girls, after mass was over, had gone to the pool, shown each other their dresses, and begun to play. And the whim seized them to splash in the water. The younger one was just going to wade into the pool with her little slippers on; but the older one said: —

"Don't do it, Malashka.... your mother will scold. I 'm going to take off my shoes and stockings .... you take off yours."

The little girls took off their shoes and stockings, held up their clothes, and went into the pool so as to meet. Malashka waded in up to her ankles, and said: —

"It 's deep, Akulyushka[1] .... I am afraid."

"Nonsense! It won't be any deeper. Come straight toward me."

They approached nearer and nearer to each other. And Akulka said: —

"Be careful, Malashka, don't splash, but go more slowly."

But the words were hardly out of her mouth, when Malashka put her foot down into the water; it splashed directly on Akulka's sarafan. The sarafan was well spattered, and the water flew into her nose and eyes.

Akulka saw the spots on her sarafan; she became

[1] Akulka and Akulyushka, diminutives of Akulina, colloquial for Akilina, Aquilina. Malashka is diminutive of Malanya, colloquial for Melania, Melaine. — ED.

angry with Malashka, scolded her, ran after her, tried to slap her.

Malashka was frightened when she saw what mischief she had done; she sprang out of the pool, and hastened home.

Akulka's mother happened to pass by and saw her little daughter's sarafan spattered, and her shirt bedaubed.

"How did you get yourself all covered with dirt, you good-for-nothing?"

"Malashka spattered me on purpose."

Akulka's mother caught Malashka, and struck her on the back of the head.

Malashka howled along the whole street. Malashka's mother came out: —

"What are you striking my daughter for?"

She began to scold her neighbor. A word for a word; the women got into a quarrel. The muzhiks hastened out, a great crowd gathered on the street. All were screaming. No one would listen to any one. They quarreled, and the one jostled the other; there was a general row imminent: but an old woman, Akulka's grandmother,[1] interfered.

She came out into the midst of the muzhiks, and began to speak.

"What are you doing, neighbors? What day is it? We ought to rejoice. And you are doing such wrong things!"

They did not heed the old woman; they almost struck her. And the old woman would never have succeeded in persuading them, had it not been for Akulka and Malashka. While the women were keeping up the quarrel, Akulka cleaned her sarafanchik, and came out again to the pool in the alley. She picked up a little stone, and began to clear away the earth by the pool, so as to let the water run into the street.

While she was cleaning it out, Malashka also came along and began to help her — to make a little gutter with a splinter.

[1] *Babka.*

The muzhiks were just coming to blows when the water reached the street, flowing through the gutter made by the little girls; and it went straight to the very spot where the old woman was trying to separate the muzhiks.

The little girls were chasing it, one on one side, the other on the other, of the runnel.

"Hold it back, Malashka! hold it!" cried Akulka. Malashka also tried to say something, but she laughed so that she could not speak.

Thus the little girls were chasing it, and laughing as the splinter swam down the runnel.

They ran right into the midst of the muzhiks. The old woman saw them, and she said to the muzhiks: —

"You should fear God, you muzhiks! It was on account of these same little girls that you picked a quarrel, but they forgot all about it long ago; dear little things, they are playing together lovingly again."

The muzhiks looked at the little girls, and felt ashamed. Then the muzhiks laughed at themselves, and went home to their dvors.

"*If ye are not like little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"

TWO BROTHERS AND GOLD

Once upon a time, there lived, not far from Jerusalem, two brothers, the elder Afanasi, and the younger one Ioann. They lived on a mountain, not far from the city, and subsisted on what men gave them. The brothers spent all their time in work. They did not work for themselves, but for the poor. Wherever there were people worn out by work, wherever they were ill, or orphans or widows, there the brothers would go, and there they would work, and on their departure take no pay. Thus the brothers would spend a whole week at a time, and only on Saturday evening would they come back to their dwelling. Only on Sunday they stayed at home, praying and talking. And the angel of the Lord

came to them and blessed them. On Monday they parted, each going his own way.

Thus the brothers lived many summers; and every week the angel of the Lord came to them, and blessed them.

One Monday, when the brothers were going out to work, and had already started in different directions, the elder, Afanasi, began to feel sorry to part from his beloved brother; and he halted, and looked back. Ioann was walking on his way, with head bent, and not looking back.

But suddenly Ioann also stopped, and, as if he saw something, began to gaze back intently, shading his eyes with his hand. Then he approached what he was looking at; then suddenly he leaped to one side, and, without looking round, ran to the base of the mountain, and up the mountain, away from that place, as if a wild beast were pursuing him.

Afanasi was surprised, and turned back to the place to see what had scared his brother so.

As he approached nearer, he saw something glistening in the sun. He came still nearer. On the grass, as if thrown out from a measure, a heap of gold was lying. ....

And Afanasi was still more astonished, both at the gold and at his brother's flight.

"What scared him? and why did he run away?" Afanasi asked himself. "There is no sin in gold: sin is in man. Gold can do no harm: it may do good. How many widows and orphans this gold can nourish! how many naked it can clothe! how many poor and sick it can heal! We are now serving-men; but our service is small, just as our strength is small. But with this gold, we can be of better service to people."

Thus reasoned Afanasi, and he wanted to tell all this to his brother; but Ioann was already gone out of hearing, and could only be seen now like a little beetle on the other mountain.

And Afanasi took off his coat, filled it with as much gold as he had strength to lug, put it on his shoulder,

and carried it to the city. He came to a hotel, deposited the gold with the hotel-keeper, and went for the rest of it.

And when he had got all the gold, he went to the merchants, bought land in the city, bought stone and lumber, engaged laborers, and began to build three houses.

And Afanasi lived in the city three months. He built in the city three houses, — one house, an asylum for widows and orphans; the second house, a hospital for the sick and poverty-stricken; the third house, for pilgrims and beggars.

And Afanasi found three pious old men; and one of them he placed over the asylum, the other over the hospital, and the third over the pilgrims' home.

And still Afanasi had left three thousand gold pieces. And he gave to each of the old men a thousand to distribute among the poor.

And all three of the houses began to fill with people, and men began to praise Afanasi for all that he had done. And Afanasi was so delighted at this, that he did not care to leave the city.

But Afanasi loved his brother; and, having said good-by to the people, and not leaving himself any money at all, and wearing the very same old clothes in which he had come, he went back to his house.

And as Afanasi was approaching his mountain, he kept thinking: —

"My brother reasoned wrong when he jumped away from the gold and fled. Have n't I done better?"

And this thought had scarcely occurred to Afanasi, when suddenly he saw standing, directly in his path, the same angel who had blessed them; he looked sternly at him.

And Afanasi was stupefied, and could only say: —

"What is it, Lord?"

And the angel opened his lips, and said: —

"Get thee hence! Thou art unworthy to live with thy brother. Thy brother's one leap is worth more than all those things that thou hast done with thy gold."

And Afanasi began to tell how many poor and wanderers he had fed, how many orphans he had cared for.

And the angel said to him: —

"The Devil, who put down the gold to seduce thee, also taught thee these words."

And then Afanasi felt the prick of conscience, and understood that he had not done these deeds for God's sake; and he burst into tears, and began to repent.

Then the angel stepped out of the road, and allowed him to pass; and there stood Ioann, waiting for his brother. And from that time Afanasi did not yield to the temptation of the Devil who had scattered the gold; and he learned that God and men can be served, not by gold, but only by labor.

And the brothers continued to live as before.

ILYAS

THERE lived in the government of Ufa a Bashkir by the name of Ilyas. When his father died, Ilyas was left by no means rich, but the year before his father had got him a wife, and at that time Ilyas's possessions consisted of seven mares, two cows, and a score of sheep. Now Ilyas was a good manager,[1] and he began to gain; from morning till night he and his wife worked; he got up earlier than any one else, and went to bed later than any one else, and each year he kept getting richer.

Thus Ilyas toiled for thirty-five years, and he made a great fortune. He had two hundred head of horse, a hundred and fifty head of horned cattle, and twelve hundred sheep. The servants pastured the flocks and herds; and the maid-servants milked the mares and cows, and made kumys, butter, and cheese.

Ilyas had plenty of everything, and every one round about envied Ilyas's life. Men said: —

"Lucky man, Ilyas. He has plenty of everything; he doesn't need to die."

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

Fine people began to get acquainted with Ilyas, and associate with him. And guests came to visit him from far and near. And Ilyas received them all, and gave them all food and drink. Whoever came had kumys; all had tea, chowder,[1] and mutton. As soon as guests came, he would immediately have a ram or two killed: and if many came, they would have a mare also killed.

Ilyas had two sons and a daughter. He married off his sons, and got his daughter a husband. When Ilyas was poor, his sons worked with him, and they themselves pastured the flocks and herds; but as they became rich, the sons began to get spoiled, and one took to drinking.

One, the elder, was killed in a brawl; and the other, the younger, got a proud wife; and this son began to be disobedient to his father, and Ilyas was compelled to banish him.

Ilyas banished him, but gave him a house and cattle; and Ilyas's wealth was diminished. And soon after this a distemper fell upon Ilyas's sheep, and many perished. Then there came a year of famine; the hay did not ripen; many cattle died during the winter. Then the Kirgiz carried off his best horses, and Ilyas's property was still further diminished.

Ilyas began to fall lower and lower. And his strength was less than it had been. And at the age of seventy years, Ilyas had come to such a pass that he began to sell out his furs, his carpets, saddles, and kibitkas; and then he had to dispose of his last cattle, and Ilyas came to nothing.

He himself did not realize how he had nothing left; but he and his wife were obliged, in their old age, to hire out as servants. All Ilyas's possessions consisted of the clothes on his body, his shuba, a hat, shoes, and slippers — yes, and his wife, Sham-Shemagi, now an old woman. His banished son had gone to a far-off land, and his daughter died. And then there was no one to help the old people.

Their neighbor, Muhamedshah, felt sorry for the old people. Muhamedshah himself was neither poor nor

[1] *Sherba*, or *shcherba*, fish-broth.

rich, but lived in medium circumstances; and he was a good man.

He remembered Ilyas's hospitality,[1] and pitied him, and said to Ilyas:—

"Come, Ilyas," says he, "and live with me — you and your old woman. In summer you can work for me in the garden, and in winter take care of the cattle; and Sham-Shemagi may milk the mares, and make kumys. I will feed and clothe you both; and whatever you need, tell me; I will give it."

Ilyas thanked his neighbor, and he and his wife began to live with Muhamedshah as servants. At first it came hard to them, but afterward they got used to it; and the old people went on living and working as much as their strength permitted.

The khozyaïn found it profitable to keep such people, because they had been masters[2] themselves, and knew how to keep things orderly, and were not lazy, and worked according to their strength; only Muhamedshah felt sorry to see how people of such high station should have fallen to such a low condition.

Once it came to pass that some guests, some kinsmen from a distance, came to visit Muhamedshah; a Mulla[3] came with them.

Muhamedshah gave orders to have a ram caught and killed. Ilyas dressed the ram, cooked it, and served it to the guests. The guests ate the mutton, drank some tea, and took some kumys.

While the guests were sitting with the khozyaïn on down pillows, on carpets, and were drinking kumys out of cups, and chatting, Ilyas had finished his chores, and was passing in front of the door.

Muhamedshah saw him, and asked a guest:—

"Did you see that old man who went by the door?"

"I saw him," said the guest; "but what is there remarkable about him?"

[1] *Khlyeb-sol;* literally, bread-salt.

[2] *Khozyaeva.*

[3] *Mulla* or *Molla,* a sort of title given to priest and teachers among the Mohammedans.

"This is remarkable, — he was once our richest man. His name is Ilyas; maybe you have heard of him?"

"Certainly I have," said the guest. "I never saw him before, but his fame has been widespread."

"Now he has nothing at all left, and lives out at service with me; he and his old woman milk the cows."

The guest was amazed, clucked with his tongue, shook his head, and said: —

"Yes, this shows how fortune turns round like a wheel; he who is on top gets to the bottom. Well, I suppose the old man feels pretty bad about it?"

"Who can tell about him? He lives quietly, peacefully; works well."

The guest said: —

"May I have a talk with him? I should like to ask him about his life."

"Well, you can," says the khozyaïn, and shouts toward the kibitka, "Babaï,[1] come in; bring some kumys, and call your old woman."

So Ilyas came with his wife. He greeted the guests and his master, repeated a prayer, and squatted down by the door. But his wife went behind the curtain, and sat with her mistress.

Ilyas was given a cup of kumys. Ilyas wished the health of the guests and of his master, bowed, sipped a little, and set it down.

"Well, dyedushka," says the guest, "I suppose you feel rather blue looking at us, to remember your past life, — how you used to be in luck, and how now your life is spent in sorrow?"

And Ilyas smiled and said: —

"If I told you about my fortune and misfortune, you would not believe me. Better ask my wife. She is a woman, — what 's in her heart 's on her tongue also. She will tell you the whole truth about this matter."

And the guest spoke to her behind the curtain: "Well, now, babushka, tell us what you think about your former luck, and your present misfortune."

[1] *Babaï*, signifies *dyedushka*, little grandfather, in Bashkirian. — AUTHOR'S NOTE IN TEXT.

And Sham-Shemagi spoke from behind the curtain :—

"This is what I think about it : my old man and I have lived fifty years. We sought for happiness, and did not find it ; and now here it is two years since we lost everything, and have been living out at service ; and we have found real happiness, and ask for nothing better."

The guests were amazed ; and the khozyaïn was amazed, and even rose from his seat, lifted the curtain to look at the old woman ; and the old woman was standing, with folded arms. She smiled as she looked at her old man, and the old man smiled back.

The old woman went on : —

"I am speaking the truth, not jesting. We sought for happiness for half a century, and as long as we were rich we did not find it ; but now that we have nothing left, and have to go out to service, we have found such happiness that we ask for nothing better."

"But wherein consists your happiness now?"

"Well, in this : while we were rich, my old man and I never had an hour's rest. We never had time to talk, nor to think about our souls, nor to pray to God. There was nothing for us but care. When we had guests, it was a bother how to treat them, what to give them, so that they might not talk ill about us. Then, when guests went away, we had to look after our workpeople ; they would have to rest, they would have to be furnished with enough to eat, and we would have to see to it that nothing that was ours got lost. So we sinned. Then, again, there was worry lest the wolf should kill a colt or a calf, or lest thieves should drive off our horses. We would lie down to sleep, but could not sleep for fear the sheep should trample the lambs. We would go out, we would walk in the night ; and at last, when we would get ourselves calmed down, then, again, there would be anxiety about getting food for the winter. Besides this, my old man and I never agreed. He would say we must do so, and I would say we must do *so ;* and we would begin to quarrel ; so we sinned. So we lived in worry and care, in worry and care, and never knew the happiness of life."

"Well, and now?"

"Now, when my old man and I get up in the morning, we always have a talk, in love and sympathy, we have nothing to quarrel about, nothing to worry about; our only care is to serve our khozyaïn. We work according to our strength, we work willingly, so that our khozyaïn may not lose, but gain. When we come in, we have dinner, we have supper, we have kumys. If it is cold, we have our kizyak[1] to warm us, and a sheepskin shuba. And we have time to talk and think about our souls, and to pray to God. For fifty years we sought for happiness, and only now we have found it!"

The guests began to laugh.

But Ilyas said:—

"Don't laugh, brothers; this thing is no jest, but human life. And the old woman and I were foolish when we wept over the loss of our property, but now God has revealed the truth to us; and it is not for our own consolation, but for your good, that we reveal it to you."

And the Mulla said:—

"This is a wise saying, and Ilyas has told the exact truth; and this is written also in the Scriptures."

And the guests ceased laughing and were lost in thought.

[1] *Kizyak* or *tizyak*, a Tartar word meaning a brick made of dried dung.

THE THREE HERMITS

(1886)

"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
Be ye not therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him." — MATT. vi. 6, 7.

A BISHOP set sail in a ship from the city of Archangelsk to Solovki.[1] In the same ship sailed some pilgrims to the saints.

The wind was propitious, the weather was clear, the sea was not rough. The pilgrims, some of whom were lying down, some lunching, some sitting in little groups, conversed together.

The bishop also came on deck and began to walk up and down on the bridge. As he approached the bow, he saw a knot of people crowded together. A little muzhik was pointing his hand at something in the sea, and talking; and the people were listening.

The bishop stood still, and looked where the little muzhik was pointing; nothing was to be seen, except the sea glittering in the sun.

The bishop came closer and began to listen. When the little muzhik saw the bishop, he took off his cap, and stopped speaking. The people also, when they saw the bishop, took off their hats, and paid their respects.

"Don't mind me, brothers," said the bishop. "I have also come to listen to what you are saying, my good friend."

[1] The Slovetsky Monastery, at the mouth of the Dvina River.

"This fisherman was telling us about some hermits,"[1] said a merchant, who was bolder than the rest.

"What about the hermits?" asked the bishop, as he came to the gunwale, and sat down on a box. "Tell me too; I should like to hear. What were you pointing at?"

"Well, then, yonder 's the little island just heaving in sight," said the little peasant; and he pointed toward the port side. "On that very islet, three hermits live, working out their salvation."

"Where is the little island?" asked the bishop.

"Here, look along my arm, if you please. You see that little cloud? Well, just below it to the left it shows like a streak."

The bishop looked and looked; the water gleamed in the sun, but from lack of practice he could not see anything.

"I don't see it," says he. "What sort of hermits are they who live on the little island?"

"God's people,"[2] replied the peasant. "For a long time I had heard tell of them, but I never chanced to see them until last summer."

And the fisherman again began to relate how he had been out fishing, and how he was driven to that island, and knew not where he was. In the morning he started to look around, and stumbled upon a little earthen hut, and he found in the hut one hermit, and then two others came in. They fed him, and dried him, and helped him repair his boat.

"What sort of men were they?" asked the bishop.

"One was rather small, humpbacked, very, very old; he was dressed in well-worn stole; he must have been more than a hundred years old; the gray hairs in his beard were already turning green; but he always had a smile ready, and he was as serene as an angel of heaven. The second was taller, also old, in a torn kaftan; his long beard was growing a little yellowish, but he was a strong man; he turned my boat over as if it had been a

[1] *Startsui*, plural of *starets*, a venerable man, a monk. The Russian title of the story is *Tri Startsa*.

[2] *Bozhi liudi*, God's men, the usual term for monks, pilgrims, and hermits.

tub, — and I did n't even have to help him: he was also a jolly man. But the third was tall, with a long beard reaching to his knee, and white as the moon; but he was gloomy; his eyes glared out from under beetling brows; and he was naked, all save a plaited belt."

"What did they say to you?" asked the bishop.

"They did everything mostly without speaking, and they talked very little among themselves; one had only to look, and the other understood. I began to ask the tall one if they had lived there long. He frowned, muttered something, grew almost angry: then the little old man instantly seized him by the hand, smiled, and the large man said nothing. But the old man said, 'Excuse us,' and smiled."

While the peasant was speaking, the ship had been sailing nearer and nearer to the islands.

"There, now you can see plainly," said the merchant. "Now please look, your reverence,"[1] said he, pointing.

The bishop tried to look, and he barely managed to make out a black speck — the little island.

The bishop gazed and gazed; and he went from the bow to the stern, and he approached the helmsman.

"What is that little island," says he, "that you see over yonder?"

"As far as I know, it has no name; there are a good many of them here."

"Is it true as they say, that some monks are winning their salvation there?"

"They say so, your reverence, but I don't rightly know. Fishermen, they say, have seen them. Still, folks talk a good deal of nonsense."

"I should like to land on the little island, and see the hermits," said the bishop. "How can I manage it?"

"It is impossible to go there in the ship," said the helmsman. "You might do it in a boat, but you will have to ask the captain."

They summoned the captain.

"I should like to have a sight of those hermits," said

[1] *Vashe preosvyashchenstvo.*

the bishop. "Is it out of the question to take me there?"

The captain tried to dissuade him.

"It is possible, quite possible, but we should waste much time; and I take the liberty of assuring your reverence, they are not worth looking at. I have heard from people that those old men are perfectly stupid; they don't understand anything, and can't say anything, just like some sort of sea-fish."

"I wish it," said the bishop. "I will pay for the trouble, if you will take me there."

There was nothing else to be done: the sailors arranged it; they shifted sail. The helmsman put the ship about and they sailed toward the island. A chair was set for the bishop on the bow. He sat down and looked. And all the people gathered on the bow, all looked at the little island. And those who had trustworthy eyes already began to see rocks on the island, and point out the hut. And one even saw the three hermits. The captain got out a spy-glass, gazed through it, handed it to the bishop.

"He is quite right," said the captain; "there on the shore at the right, standing on a great rock, are three men."

The bishop also looked through the glass; he pointed it in the right direction and plainly saw the three men standing there, — one tall, the second shorter, but the third very short. They were standing on the shore, hand in hand.

The captain came to the bishop: —

"Here, your reverence, the ship must come to anchor; if it suit you, you can be put ashore in a yawl, and we will anchor out here and wait for you."

Immediately they got the tackle ready, cast anchor, and furled the sails; the vessel brought up, began to roll. They lowered a boat, the rowers manned it, and the bishop started to climb down by the companion-way. The bishop climbed down, took his seat on the thwart; the rowers lifted their oars; they sped away to the island. They sped away like a stone from a

sling; they could see the three old men standing, — the tall one naked, with his plaited belt; the shorter one in his torn kaftan; and the little old humpbacked one, in his old stole, — all three were standing there, hand in hand.

The sailors reached shore and caught hold with the boat-hook. The bishop got out.

The hermits bowed before him; he blessed them; they bowed still lower. And the bishop began to speak to them: —

"I heard," says he, "that you hermits were here, working out your salvation, that you pray Christ our God for your fellow-men; and I am here by God's grace, an unworthy servant of Christ, called to be a shepherd to His flock; and so I desired also, if I might, to give instruction to you, who are the servants of God."

The hermits made no reply; they smiled, they exchanged glances.

"Tell me how you are working out your salvation, and how you serve God," said the bishop.

The middle hermit sighed, and looked at the aged one, at the venerable one; the tall hermit frowned, and looked at the aged one, at the venerable one. And the venerable old hermit smiled, and said: —

"Servant of God, we have not the skill to serve God; we only serve ourselves, getting something to eat."

"How do you pray to God?" asked the bishop.

And the venerable hermit said: —

"We pray thus: 'You three, have mercy on us three.'" [1]

And as soon as the venerable hermit said this, all three of the hermits raised their eyes to heaven, and all three said, "*Troe vas, troe nas, pomiluï nas!*"

The bishop smiled, and said: —

"You have heard this about the Holy Trinity, but you should not pray so. I have taken a fancy to you, men of God. I see that you desire to please God, but you know not how to serve Him. You should not pray

[1] *Troe vas, troe nas, pomiluï nas!*

so; but listen to me, I will teach you. I shall not teach you my own words, but shall teach you from God's scriptures how God commanded all people to pray to God."

And the bishop began to explain to the hermits how God revealed Himself to men. He taught them about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and said: —

"God the Son came upon earth to save men, and this is the way He taught all men to pray; listen, and repeat after me" —

And the bishop began to say: —

"*Our Father.*"

And one hermit repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

And then the second repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

And the third also repeated: —

"*Our Father.*"

"*Who art in heaven;*" and the hermits tried to repeat, "*Who art in heaven.*"

But the middle hermit mixed the words up, he could not repeat them so; and the tall, naked hermit could not repeat them, — his mustache had grown so as to cover his mouth, he could not speak distinctly; and the venerable, toothless hermit could not stammer the words intelligibly.

The bishop said it a second time; the hermits repeated it again. And the bishop sat down on a little boulder, and the hermits stood about him; and they looked at his lips, and they repeated it after him until they knew it. And all that day till evening the bishop labored with them; and ten times, and twenty times, and a hundred times, he repeated each word, and the hermits learned it by rote. And when they got mixed up, he set them right, and made them begin all over again.

And the bishop did not leave the hermits until he had taught them the whole of the Lord's Prayer. They repeated it after him, and then by themselves.

First of all, the middle hermit learned it, and he re-

peated it from beginning to end; and the bishop bade him say it again and again, and still again to repeat it; and the others also learned the whole prayer.

It was already beginning to grow dark, and the moon was just coming up out of the sea, when the bishop arose to go back to the ship.

The bishop said farewell to the hermits; they all bowed very low before him. He raised them to their feet and kissed each of them, bade them pray as he had taught them; and he took his seat in the boat, and returned to the ship.

And while the bishop was rowed back to the ship, he heard all the time how the hermits were repeating the Lord's Prayer at the top of their voices.

They returned to the ship, and here the voices of the hermits could no longer be heard; but they could still see, in the light of the moon, the three old men standing in the very same place on the shore, — one shorter than the rest in the middle, with the tall one on the right, and the other on the left hand.

The bishop returned to the ship, climbed up on deck; the anchor was hoisted; the sails were spread, and bellied with wind; the ship began to move, and they sailed away.

The bishop came to the stern, and took a seat there, and kept looking at the little island. At first the hermits were to be seen; then they were hidden from sight, and only the island was visible; and then the island went out of sight, and only the sea was left playing in the moonlight.

The pilgrims lay down to sleep, and all was quiet on deck. But the bishop cared not to sleep; he sat by himself in the stern, looked out over the sea in the direction where the island had faded from sight, and thought about the good hermits.

He thought of how they had rejoiced in what they had learned in the prayer; and he thanked God because He had led him to the help of the hermits, in teaching them the word of God.

Thus the bishop was sitting and thinking, looking at

the sea in the direction where the little island lay hidden. And his eyes were filled with the moonlight, as it danced here and there on the waves. Suddenly he saw something shining and gleaming white in the track of the moon. Was it a bird, a gull, or a boat-sail gleaming white? The bishop strained his sight.

"A sail-boat," he said to himself, "is chasing us. Yes, it is catching up with us very rapidly. It was far, far off, but now it is close to us. But, after all, it is not much like a sail-boat. Anyway, something is chasing us, and catching up with us."

And the bishop could not decide what it was, — a boat, or not a boat; a bird, or not a bird; a fish, or not a fish. It was like a man, but very great; but a man could not be in the midst of the sea.

The bishop got up and went to the helmsman.

"Look!" says he, "what is that? what is that, brother? what is it?" said the bishop.

But by this time he himself saw. It was the hermits running over the sea. Their gray beards gleamed white, and shone; and they drew near the ship as if it were stationary.

The helmsman looked. He was scared, dropped the tiller, and cried with a loud voice: —

"Lord! the hermits are running over the sea as if it were dry land!"

The people heard and sprang up; all rushed aft. All beheld the hermits running, hand in hand. The end ones swung their arms; they signaled the ship to come to. All three ran over the water as if it were dry land, and did not move their feet.

It was not possible to bring the ship to before the hermits overtook it, came on board, raised their heads, and said with one voice: —

"We have forgotten, servant of God, we have forgotten what thou didst teach us. While we were learning it, we remembered it; but when we ceased for an hour to repeat it, one word slipped away; we have forgotten it: the whole was lost. We remember none of it; teach it to us again."

The bishop crossed himself, bowed low to the hermits, and said: —

"Acceptable to God is your prayer, ye hermits. It is not for me to teach you. Pray for us, sinners."

And the bishop bowed before the feet of the hermits. And the hermits paused, turned about, and went back over the sea. And until the morning, there was something seen shining in the direction where the hermits had gone.

POPULAR LEGENDS

(1886)

HOW THE LITTLE DEVIL EARNED A CRUST OF BREAD

A POOR muzhik was going out to plow, though he had eaten no breakfast; and he took with him, from the house, a crust of bread. The muzhik turned over his plow, unfastened the bar, put it under the bush; and then he left his crust of bread, and covered it with his kaftan. The horse was almost dead, and the muzhik was very hungry. The muzhik drove in the plow, unhitched the horse, gave her something to eat, and went to his kaftan to get a bite for himself. The muzhik picked up his kaftan; the crust was gone. He searched and searched; turned his kaftan inside out, shook it: there was no crust. The muzhik was amazed.

"This is a marvelous thing," he said to himself. "I have n't seen any one, and yet some one has carried off my crust."

But a little devil[1] had stolen the crust while the muzhik was plowing, and had perched on a shrub to hear how the muzhik would swear, and call him, the devil, by name.

The muzhik was disappointed.

"Well, now, I am not going to die of starvation. Of course the one that took it must have needed it. Let him eat it, and be welcome."

And the muzhik went to the well, got a drink of water, sighed, caught his horse, harnessed her, and began to plow again.

[1] *Chortyonok.*

The little devil was vexed because he had not led the muzhik into sin, and he went to tell about it to the biggest of the devils. He came to the big devil, and told him how he had stolen the crust from the muzhik, who, instead of getting angry, had said, "Be welcome."

The big devil was angry.

"Why," said he, "in this affair the muzhik has got the better of you: you yourself are to blame for it; you did not know how to do it. If," said he, "first muzhiks, and then peasant women, were to be caught by any such trick, it would n't be of any use for us to be in existence. It 's no use doing the thing that way. Go back to the muzhik," said he, "earn that crust. If within three years' time you do not get the better of the muzhik, I 'll give you a bath in holy water."

The little devil was alarmed; he ran back to earth and began to cogitate how he might atone for his fault. He thought and thought, and he thought out a scheme.[1]

The little devil turned himself into a good man, and took service with the poor muzhik. And during a dry summer, he advised the muzhik to sow corn in a swamp. The muzhik took the laborer's advice and sowed in the swamp. The other muzhiks had everything burned up by the sun; but the poor muzhik had dense, high, full-eared corn. The muzhik had enough to live on till the next year; and even then, much corn remained.

That year, the laborer advised the muzhik to plant his grain on the high land. And the summer proved to be rainy. And the people had sowed their corn, but it sweat and the kernels did not fill out; but the muzhik had a quantity of corn ripen on the high land. And the muzhik had still much more corn than he needed, and he knew not what to do with it.

And the laborer taught the muzhik to grind the corn, and distil brandy. The muzhik distilled the brandy and began to drink himself, and gave others to drink.

The little devil came to the big one, and began to boast that he had earned the crust. The big one went to investigate.

[1] *Dumal, dumal i pridumal.*

He went to the muzhik's and saw how he invited the rich men, how he treated them all to brandy. The muzhik's wife offered the brandy to the guests. As she went round the table she hit against it and overturned a glass. The muzhik lost his temper, scolded his wife.

"Look you," says he, "you devilish fool! What makes you slop it so? you are wasting such good whisky, you bandy-legged [goose]!"

The little devil poked the big one with his elbow. "Just look!" said he, and thought how now he would not lack for crusts.

The man[1] kept berating his wife; he himself began to pass round the brandy. A poor peasant came in from his work. He came in without being invited; he greeted those present; he sat down; he saw the people drinking brandy. He also would have liked to have a taste of the brandy. He sat and he sat and he kept swallowing his spittle, but the host did not offer any to him. He only muttered to himself:—

"Why must we furnish everybody with brandy?"

This pleased the big devil; but the little devil bragged.

"Just wait a little, and see what will come of it."

The rich muzhiks were drinking; the host also drank. They all began to fawn on one another, and flatter each other, and to tell rather buttery and scandalous stories. The big devil listened and listened, and he commended him for this.

"If," said he, "such flattery and such deception can come from this drunkenness, then they will all be in our hands."

"Just wait," said the little devil, "what more will come of it. There they are going to drink one little glass more. Now, like little foxes, they are wagging their tails at one another and trying to deceive one another; but just see how, in a short time, they will be acting like fierce wolves."

The muzhiks drained their glasses once more, and

[1] *Khozyaïn*, master of the house.

their talk became louder and rougher. In place of buttery speeches, they began to indulge in abuse; they began to get angry, and tweak one another's noses. The host also took part in the squabble. Even him they beat unmercifully.

The big devil looked on, and praised him for this also.

"This," said he, "is good."

But the little devil said: —

"Just wait! See what more will happen. Let them take a third drink. Now they are as mad as wolves; but give them time, let them drink once more; they will instantly begin to behave like hogs."

The muzhiks drank for the third time. They lost all control of themselves. They themselves had no idea what they stammered or shrieked, and they talked all at once. They started to go home, each in his own way, or in groups of two and three. They all fell into the gutter. The host went to see his guests out; he fell on his nose in a pool and got all smeared; he lay there like a boar, grunting.

This delighted the big devil still more.

"Well," says he, "this scheme of drunkenness was good. You have earned your crust. Now tell me," says he, "how did you make this liquor? You must have put into it some fox's blood, in the first place: that was what made the muzhik keen as a fox; and then some wolf's blood: that was what made him fierce as a wolf; and finally, of course, you added swine's blood: that made him act like a hog."

"No," said the little devil, "I did nothing of the sort. I only made it for him out of all the superfluous grain. This wild blood always exists in him, but has no way of getting out when the grain is properly used. At first he did not grudge even his last crust; but as soon as he began to have a superfluity of grain, he began to scheme how he might amuse himself. And I taught him the fun, — brandy-drinking. And as soon as he began to distil God's gift for his fun, the blood of the fox and the wolf and the hog began to show itself.

Now all he needs, to be always a beast, is to keep on drinking brandy."

The chief of the devils praised the little devil, forgave him for the crust of bread, and made him one of his staff.

THE REPENTANT SINNER

"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." — LUKE xxiii. 42, 43.

ONCE there lived on earth a man seventy years old, and he had spent his whole life in sin. And this man fell ill, and did not make confession. And when death came, at the last hour he wept, and cried: —

"Lord, forgive me as thou didst the thief on the cross."

He had barely spoken these words, when his soul left his body. And the sinner's soul turned in love to God, and believed in His mercy, and came to the gates of paradise.

And the sinner began to knock, and ask admission to the kingdom of heaven.

And he heard a voice from within the gates: —

"What manner of man knocketh at the gates of paradise? and what have been the deeds done by this man in his life?"

And the voice of the accuser replied, and rehearsed all the sinful deeds of this man. And he did not mention one good deed.

And the voice from within the gates replied: —

"Sinners cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. Get thee hence!"

And the man said: —

"Lord, I hear thy voice; but I see not thy face, and I know not thy name."

And the voice replied: —

"I am Peter the Apostle."

And the sinner said: —

"Have pity upon me, Peter Apostle! Remember human weakness and God's mercy. Wert thou not one of Christ's disciples? and didst thou not hear from His very lips His teaching? and hast thou not seen the example of His life? And remember, when He was in sorrow, and His soul was cast down, and thrice He asked thee to watch with Him and pray, and thou didst sleep, for thy eyes were heavy, and thrice He found thee sleeping. So it was with me.

"And remember also how thou didst promise Him not to deny Him till death, and how thrice thou didst deny Him when they took Him before Caiaphas. So it was with me.

"And remember, also, how the cock crew, and thou didst go out and weep bitterly. So it is with me. It is impossible for thee not to let me in."

And the voice from within the gates of paradise was silent.

And, after waiting awhile, the sinner began again to knock, and to demand entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

And a second voice was heard within the doors; and it said:—

"Who is this man, and how did he live in the world?"

And the voice of the accuser again rehearsed all the sinner's evil deeds, and mentioned no good deeds.

And the voice from within the gates replied:—

"Get thee gone! Sinners like thee cannot live with us in paradise."

And the sinner said:—

"Lord, I hear thy voice; but I see not thy face, and I know not thy name."

And the voice replied:—

"I am David, the tsar and prophet."

And the sinner did not despair, did not depart from the gates of paradise, but began to say:—

"Have mercy upon me, Tsar David, and remember human weakness and God's mercy. God loved thee, and magnified thee before the people. Thou hadst

everything, — a kingdom and glory and wealth, and wives and children; and yet thou didst see from thy roof a poor man's wife; and sin came upon thee, and thou didst take Uriah's wife, and thou didst kill him by the sword of the Ammonites. Thou, a rich man, didst take the poor man's lamb, and kill the man himself. This was exactly what I did.

"And remember next how thou didst repent, and say, *I acknowledge my sin, and am grieved because of my transgressions.* So did I also. It is impossible for thee not to forgive me."

And the voice within the gates was silent.

And after waiting a little longer, yet again the sinner knocked, and demanded entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

And a third voice was heard from behind the gates; and it said: —

"Who is this man, and how did he live in the world?"

And the voice of the accuser replied, and for the third time rehearsed the man's evil deeds, and no good ones did it mention.

And the voice sounded from behind the gates: —

"Get thee gone! Sinners cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

And the sinner replied: —

"I hear thy voice; but thy face I see not, and thy name I know not."

And the voice replied: —

"I am John, the beloved disciple of Christ."

And the sinner rejoiced, and said: —

"Now it is impossible not to let me in! Peter and David would admit me because they know human weakness and God's mercy. But thou wilt admit me because thou hast much love. Hast thou not written, O John, in thy book, that God is love, and that whoever doth not love knoweth not God? And didst thou not in thine old age constantly say one single word to men, — 'Brothers, love one another'? How, then, canst thou hate me and reject me? Either deny thy saying, or show love unto me, and let me into the kingdom of heaven."

And the gates of paradise opened; and John received the repentant sinner, and let him come into the kingdom of heaven.

A SEED AS BIG AS A HEN'S EGG

Some children once found in a cave something as large as a hen's egg, with a groove about the middle, and like a seed. A passer-by saw the children playing with it, bought it for a trifle,[1] took it to the city, and gave it to the tsar as a curiosity.

The tsar summoned his wise men, and commanded them to decide what kind of a thing it was, — an egg, or a seed. The wise men cogitated, cogitated; they could not give an answer. The thing was lying in the window; and a hen flew in, began to peck at it, and pecked a hole in it; and all knew that it was a seed.

The wise men went to the tsar, and said: —

"This is a kernel of rye."

The tsar marveled. He commanded the wise men to find out where and when this seed grew. The wise men cogitated, cogitated; they hunted in books, but they found no explanation. They came to the tsar, and said: —

"We cannot give an answer. In our books, there is nothing written about this; we must ask the muzhiks whether some one of their elders has not heard tell of when and where such a seed was sown."

The tsar sent, and commanded a very aged muzhik to be brought before him. They found such an old man, and brought him to the tsar. The green, toothless starik came in; he walked with difficulty on two crutches.

The tsar showed him the seed, but the old man was almost blind; he judged of it, as it were, partly by looking at it, partly by fumbling it in his hands.

The tsar began to ask him questions: —

"Do you not know where such a seed grows? Have

[1] *P'vatak*, a copper piece worth five kopeks.

you never sown any such kind of grain in your field? Or did you never in your life purchase any such seed?"

The old man was stupid; he could barely, barely hear, barely, barely understand. He began to make reply.

"No," said he, "I never sowed any such grain in my field, and I never harvested any such, and I never bought any such. When we bought grain, all such seed was small. But," said he, "you must ask my batyushka; maybe he 's heard tell where such seed grew."

So the tsar sent for the old man's father, and bade him be brought before him. The ancient old man[1] hobbled in on one crutch. The tsar began to show him the seed. The old man could still see with his eyes. He saw very well. The tsar began to question him: —

"Do you not know, my dear old man,[2] where this seed can have grown? Have you never sown such grain in your field? or did you never in your life purchase such seed anywhere?"

Though the old man was rather hard of hearing, still he heard better than his son.

"No," says he, "I never sowed such seed in my field, nor such did I ever harvest; nor such did I ever buy, because in my day there was not money anywhere; we all lived on grain; and when it was necessary, we went shares with one another. I don't know where such seed is grown. Though our seed was much larger and more productive than that of nowadays, still I never saw such as this. But I have heard from my batyushka that, in his day, corn grew much higher than it does now, and was fuller, and had larger kernels. You must ask him."

The tsar sent for this old man's father. And they brought the grandfather also. They brought him to the tsar. The old man came before the tsar without crutches; he walked easily, his eyes were brilliant, he heard well, and spoke understandingly.

The tsar showed the seed to the old man. The old man looked at it. The old man turned it over and over.

[1] *Starik starui.* [2] *Starichok*, diminutive of *starik.*

"It is long," said he, "since I have seen such good old-fashioned grain."

The grandfather took a bite of the seed and chewed on the fragment.

"It's the very thing," said he.

"Tell me, little grandfather, where and when this kind of seed grows? Did you never sow such grain in your field? Or did you never in your life buy any such among people?"

And the old man said:—

"Such grain as this used to grow everywhere in my day. On such grain as this I have lived all my life," says he, "and fed my people. This kind of seed I have sown, and this kind I have reaped, and this kind I have sent to mill."

And the tsar asked, saying:—

"Tell me, little grandfather, did you buy such seed anywhere? or did you sow it in your field?"

The old man laughed.

"In my time," said he, "no one had ever conceived such a sin as to buy and sell grain. And they did not know about money. There was abundance of grain for all."

And the tsar asked, saying:—

"Tell me, little grandfather, when did you sow such grain, and where was your field?"

And the grandfather said:—

"My field was God's earth. Wherever there was tillage, there was my field. The earth was free. There was no such thing as private ownership. All men claimed was their work."

"Tell me," said the tsar, "tell me two things more: one thing, Why did such seed use to spring up, and now does not? And the second thing, Why does your grandson walk on two crutches, and your son on one crutch, but here you go with perfect ease—and your eyes are bright, and your teeth strong, and your speech plain and clear? Tell me, little grandfather, why these things are so?"

And the old man said:—

"These two things both came about because men have ceased to live by their own work — and they have begun to hanker after other people's things. We did not live so in old times; in old times we lived for God. We had our own, and did not lust after others'."

HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?

I

A WOMAN came from the city, to visit her younger sister in the country. The elder was a city merchant's wife; the younger, a country muzhik's. The two sisters drank tea together and talked. The older sister began to boast — to praise up her life in the city; how she lived roomily and elegantly, and went out, and how she dressed her children, and what rich things she had to eat and drink, and how she went to drive, and to walk, and to the theater.

The younger sister felt affronted, and began to depreciate the life of a merchant, and to set forth the advantages of her own, — that of the peasant.

"I would n't exchange my life for yours," says she. "Granted that we live coarsely, still we don't know what fear is. You live more elegantly; but you have to sell a great deal, else you find yourselves entirely sold. And the proverb runs, 'Loss is Gain's bigger brother.' It also happens, to-day you 're rich, but to-morrow you 're a beggar.[1] But our muzhiks' affairs are more reliable; the muzhik's life is meager, but long; we may not be rich, but we have enough."

The elder sister began to say: —

"Enough, — I should think so! So do pigs and calves! No fine dresses, no good society. How your goodman[2] works! how you live in the dunghill! and so you will die and it will be the same thing with your children."

[1] Literally, find thyself under the windows.
[2] *Khozyaïn.*

"Indeed," said the younger, "our affairs are all right. We live well. We truckle to no one, we stand in fear of no one. But you in the city all live in the midst of temptations: to-day it 's all right; but to-morrow up comes some improper person, I fear, to tempt you, and tempts your khozyaïn either to cards, or to wine, or to women. And everything goes to ruin. Is n't it so?"

Pakhom, the "goodman," was listening on the oven, as the women discussed.

"That 's true," says he, "the veritable truth. As we peasants[1] from childhood turn up mother earth,[2] so folly stays in our head, and does not depart. Our one trouble is, — so little land. If I only had as much land as I wanted, I should n't be afraid of any one — even of the Devil."

The women drank up their tea, talked some more about dresses, put away the dishes, and went to bed.

But the Devil was sitting behind the oven; he heard everything. He was delighted because the peasant woman had induced her husband to boast with her; he had boasted that, if he had land enough, the Devil could not get him!

"All right," he thinks; "you and I 'll have to fight it out. I will give you a lot of land. I 'll get you through the land."

II

Next the muzhiks lived a lady.[3] She had one hundred and twenty desyatins[4] of land. And she had always lived peaceably with the muzhiks, never taking any advantage of them. But a retired soldier engaged himself as her overseer, and he began to vex the muzhiks with fines. No matter how careful Pakhom was, either his horse would trample down the oats, or his cow would

[1] *Nash brat;* literally, our brother.
[2] *Zemlya-matushka.*
[3] *Baruinka,* diminutive of *baruinya,* gracious lady.
[4] Three hundred and twenty-four acres.

wander into the garden, or his calves would get into the meadows; there was a fine for everything.

Pakhom paid the fines, and scolded and beat the domestics. And during the summer Pakhom fell into many a sin on account of this overseer. And still he was glad that he had cattle in his dvor; though fodder was scarce, he was in no apprehension.

During the winter, the rumor spread that the lady was going to sell her land, and that a dvornik from the highway had made arrangements to buy it.

The muzhiks heard it, and groaned.

"Now," think they, "the land will belong to the dvornik; he will make us pay worse fines than the lady did. It is impossible for us to live without this land. All of us around here live on it."

The peasants went to the lady in a body and began to beg her not to sell the land to the dvornik, but to let them have it. They promised to pay a higher price.

The lady agreed. The muzhiks tried to arrange, as a mir, to buy all the land. Once, twice, they collected in meeting, but there was a hitch in affairs. The evil one put them at variance; they were utterly unable to come to any agreement.

And the muzhiks determined to purchase the land individually, according to the ability of each. And the lady agreed to this also.

Pakhom heard that a neighbor had bought twenty desyatins[1] from the lady, and that she had given him a year in which to pay her half of the money. Pakhom was envious.

"They will buy all the land," he said to himself, "and I shall be behind them." He began to reason with his wife.

"The people are buying it up," said he. "We must buy ten desyatins too. Otherwise it will be impossible to live; the overseer was eating us up with fines."

They planned how to buy it. They had laid up a hundred rubles; then they sold a colt and half their bees; and they put their son out as a laborer, and they

[1] Fifty-four acres.

got some more from their brother-in-law; and thus they collected half of the money.

Pakhom gathered up the money, selected fifteen desyatins of land with forest on it, and went to the lady to make the purchase. He negotiated for fifteen desyatins, struck a bargain, and paid down the earnest-money. They went to the city, ratified the purchase; he paid down half of the money; the remainder he bound himself to pay in two years.

And Pakhom now had his land. Pakhom took seed, and sowed the land that he had bought. In a single year he paid up the debt to the lady and to his brother-in-law. And Pakhom became a proprietor.[1] He plowed all his land, and sowed it; he made hay on his own land; he cut stakes on his own land; and on his own land he pastured cattle. Pakhom would ride out over his wide fields to plow, or he would take note of his crops, or gaze at his meadows. And yet he was not happy. The grass seemed to him to be wasted, and the flowers flowering in it seemed entirely different. Formerly he used to ride over this land, — the land as land; but now the land began to be absolutely peculiar.

III

Thus Pakhom lived, and enjoyed himself. Everything would have been good, only the muzhiks began to trespass on his grain and meadows. He begged them to refrain, but they would not stop it. Now the cowboys let the cows into the meadow; now the horses escaped from the night-guard into his corn-field.

And Pakhom drove them out, and forgave it, and never went to law; then he got tired of it, and complained to the volost-court.[2] And though he knew that the muzhiks did it from carelessness, and not from malice, he said to himself: —

"It is impossible to overlook it, otherwise they 'll

[1] *Pomyeshchik.*

[2] The *volost* is a district including several villages.

always be pasturing their cattle there. We must teach them a lesson."

He thus taught them in court once; he taught them twice: first one was fined, then another. The muzhiks, Pakhom's neighbors, began to harbor spite against him. Once more they began to trespass, and this time on purpose. Some one got into his woodland by night. They cut down a dozen of his lindens for basts. Pakhom went to his grove, saw what had been done, and turned pale. Some one had been there; the linden branches lay scattered about, the stumps stood out. The whole clump had been cut down to the very last; the rascal had cleaned it all out; only one was left standing.

Pakhom fell into a rage. "Akh!" said he to himself, "if I only knew who did that, I would give him a kneading."

He thought and he thought, "Who could it be?"

"No one more likely," said he to himself, "than Semka."[1]

He went to search through Semka's dvor; he found nothing; they only exchanged some quarrelsome words. And Pakhom felt still more certain that Semyon had done it. He entered a complaint against him. They took it into court and had a long trial. The muzhik was acquitted, for there was no proof against him. Pakhom was still more affronted; he got incensed at the starshina and at the judges.

"You," said he, "are on the side of a pack of thieves. If you were decent men, you would n't acquit thieves."

Pakhom quarreled both with the judges and with his neighbors. They began even to threaten him with the "red rooster."[2] Pakhom had come to live on a broader scale on his farm, but with more constraint in the commune.

And about this time the rumor spread that the people were going to new places. And Pakhom said to himself: —

"There is no reason for *me* to go from my land; but

[1] Semka, diminutive of Semyon, Simeon.

[2] The picturesque Russian metaphor for a conflagration.

if any of our neighbors should go, it would give us more room. I would take their land for myself; I would get it around here: life would be much better, for now it is too confined."

One time Pakhom was sitting at home; a wandering muzhik came along. They let the muzhik have a night's lodging; they gave him something to eat; they entered into conversation with him: —

"Whither, please, is God taking you?"

The muzhik said that he was on his way from down the Volga, where he had been at work. The muzhik related, a word at a time, how the people had gone colonizing there. He related how they had settled there, made a community, and given each *soul* ten desyatins of land. "But the land is such," said he, "that they sowed rye. Such stalks — the horses never saw the like — so thick! five handfuls made a sheaf. One muzhik," said he, "was perfectly poor, — came with his hands alone, — and now he has six horses and two cows."

Pakhom's heart burned within him; he said to himself: "Why remain here in straitened circumstances, when it is possible to live well? I will sell my house and land here; then, with the money I get, I will start anew, and have a complete establishment. But here in these narrow quarters — it's a sin. Only I must find out all about it for myself."

He planned to be gone all summer, and started. From Samara he sailed down the Volga in a steamboat, then he went on foot four hundred versts. He reached the place. It was just so. The muzhiks were living on a generous scale,[1] on farms of ten desyatins each, and they were glad to have accessions to their community. "And any one who has a little money can buy for three rubles as much of the very best land as he wishes, besides his allotment. You can buy just as much as you wish."

Pakhom made a thorough study of it; in the autumn he returned home, and proceeded to sell out everything. He sold his land to advantage, sold his dvor,

[1] *Prostorno*, roomily.

sold all his cattle, withdrew his name from the community, waited till spring, and moved with his family to the new place.

IV

Pakhom came with his family to the new place, and enrolled himself in a large village. He treated the elders to vodka, arranged all the papers. Pakhom was accepted; he was allotted, as for five persons, fifty desyatins[1] of the land, to be located in different fields, besides the pasturage. Pakhom settled down. He got cattle. He had three times as much land as he had had before, and the land was fertile. Life was tenfold better than what it had been in the old time; he had all the arable land and fodder that he needed. He could keep as many cattle as he liked.

At first, while he was getting settled, and putting his house in order, Pakhom was well pleased; but after he began to feel at home, even this farm seemed to him rather narrow quarters.

The first year Pakhom sowed wheat on his allotment; it came up well. He was anxious to sow wheat; but his allotment seemed to him altogether too small for his ambition.

Wheat is sowed there on grass or fallow land. They sow it one year, two years, and let it lie fallow till the feather-grass comes up again. There are many rival claimants for such land and there's not nearly enough to go round.

Quarrels also arose on account of this; one was richer than another: they all wanted to sow, but the poorer ones had to resort to merchants for loans.

Pakhom was desirous of sowing as much as possible. The next year he went to a merchant and hired land for a year. He sowed more; it came up well, but he had to go a long way from the village, not less than fifteen versts. He saw how muzhik-merchants in the vicinity lived in fine houses, and got rich.

[1] One hundred and thirty-five acres.

"That's the thing," said Pakhom to himself. "If only I could buy the land, then I would have a fine house. It would all be in one piece."

And Pakhom began to cogitate how he might get a perpetual title.

Thus Pakhom lived three years. He hired land and sowed more wheat. The years were good, and the wheat grew well, and extra money was laid away.

As life passed, it became every year irksome to Pakhom to buy land with the men, to waste time over it; where the land is pretty good, the muzhiks instantly fly to it and divide it all up. He was always too late to buy cheap, and he had nothing to sow on.

But in the third year, he bought, on shares with a merchant, a pasturage of the muzhiks; and they had already plowed it. The muzhiks had been at law about it, and so the work was lost. "If I owned the land," he thinks, "I should not truckle to any one; and it would not be a sin."

And Pakhom began to inquire where he might buy land in perpetuity. And he struck upon a muzhik. The muzhik had five hundred desyatins[1] for sale; and, as he was anxious to get rid of it, he would sell at a bargain.

Pakhom began to dicker with him. He argued and argued, and finally the muzhik agreed to sell for fifteen hundred rubles, half the money on mortgage. They had already come to an agreement, when a peddler happened along, and asked Pakhom to let him have a little something to eat.

While they were drinking a cup of tea, they entered into conversation.

The peddler related how he was on his way from the distant Bashkirs.

"There," said he, "I bought of the Bashkirs fifteen hundred desyatins of land; and I had to pay only a thousand rubles."

Pakhom began to ask questions. The peddler told his story.

"All I did," said he, "was to satisfy the old men. I

[1] Thirteen hundred and fifty acres.

distributed some khalats and carpets, worth a hundred rubles, besides a chest of tea; and I gave a little wine to those who drank. And I got it for twenty kopeks a desyatin." — He exhibited the title-deed. — "The land," says he, "is by a little river, and the steppe is all covered with grass."

Pakhom went on asking more questions, — How he managed it, and who?

"The land," said the merchant, "you would n't go round it in a year, — it 's all Bashkirian. And the people are as stupid as rams. You could almost get it for nothing."

"Well," said Pakhom to himself, "why should I spend my thousand rubles for five hundred desyatins, and hang a burden of debt around my neck besides? But there, how much I could get for a thousand rubles!"

V

Pakhom asked how he went; and, as soon as he said good-by to the peddler, he determined to go. He left his house in his wife's care, took his man, and started. When they reached the city, he bought a chest of tea, gifts, wine, just as the merchant said. They traveled and traveled; they traveled five hundred versts.[1] On the seventh day they came to the range of the wandering Bashkirs. It was all just as the merchant had said. They all live in the steppe, along a little river, in felt-covered kibitkas. They themselves do not plow and they eat no bread. And their cattle graze along the steppe, and their horses are in droves. Behind the kibitkas the colts are tied, and twice a day they bring the mares to them. They milk the mares, and make kumys out of the milk. The women churn the mares' milk, and make cheese; and all the muzhiks can do is to drink kumys and tea, to eat mutton, and play on their dudkas.[2] All are polite and jolly; they keep festival all summer. The people are very dark, and cannot speak Russian, but are affable.

[1] Three hundred and thirty miles. [2] Reed-pipes.

As soon as the Bashkirs saw Pakhom, they came forth from their kibitkas; they surrounded their guest. The interpreter made his acquaintance. Pakhom told him that he had come to see about land. The Bashkirs were delighted, took him to a fine kibitka, spread rugs down, gave him a down-cushion to sit on, sat round him, and proceeded to treat him to tea and kumys. They slaughtered a ram, and gave him mutton.

Pakhom fetched from his tarantas his gifts, and began to distribute them among the Bashkirs.

Pakhom gave the Bashkirs his gifts, and divided the tea. The Bashkirs were overjoyed. They jabbered and jabbered together, and then commanded the interpreter to speak.

"They bid me tell you," says the interpreter, "that they have taken a fancy to you; and that we have a custom of doing everything possible to gratify a guest, and repay him for his gifts. You have given us gifts. Now tell what you wish from among our possessions, in order that we may give it to you."

"Above all else that you have," says Pakhom, "I would like some of your land. In my country," says he, "there is a scarcity of land. The land is cultivated to death. But you have much land, and good land. I never saw the like."

The interpreter translated for him. The Bashkirs talked and talked. Pakhom could not understand what they were saying; but he saw that they were good-natured, that they were talking at the top of their voices and laughing. Then they relapsed into silence, looked at Pakhom; and the interpreter said: —

"They bid me tell you that, in return for your kindness, they are happy to give you as much land as you wish. Only show us your hand — it shall be yours."

They were still talking, and began to dispute angrily. And Pakhom asked what they were quarreling about.

And the interpreter replied: —

"Some say that they ought to ask the head man about the land, and that without his consent it is impossible. And others say that it can be done without the head man."

VI

The Bashkirs were quarreling; suddenly a man came in a foxskin shapka.

They grew silent, and all stood up. And the interpreter said: —

"This is the head man himself."

Instantly Pakhom got out his best khalat, and gave it to the head man, together with five pounds of tea.

The head man accepted it, and sat down in the chief place. And immediately the Bashkirs began to tell him all about it.

The head man listened and listened; nodded his head, in sign of silence for all, and began to speak to Pakhom in Russian.

"Well," said he, "it can be done. Take it wherever you please. There is plenty of land."

"I shall get as much as I want," said Pakhom to himself. "I must secure it immediately, else they 'll say it 's mine, and then take it away."

"I thank you," says he, "for your kind words. I have seen that you have much land, and I need not very much. Only you must let me know what shall be mine. As soon as possible you must have it measured off and secured to me. God disposes of life and death. You good people make the grant, but the time may come when your children will take it away."

"You are right," says the head man; "it must be secured to you."

Pakhom began to speak: —

"I have heard that a merchant was here with you. You also gave him land, and struck a bargain. I should like to do the same."

The head man understood perfectly.

"This can all be done," says he. "We have a clerk; and we will go to the city, and will all put on our seals."

"And the price will be how much?" asked Pakhom.

"We have one price: one thousand rubles a day."

Pakhom did not understand. "What is this measure, the day? How many desyatins are there in it?"

"We can't reckon it," says he. "But we sell it by the day: all that you can go round in a day — that is yours; and the price of a day is one thousand rubles."

Pakhom was astonished.

"Look here," said he. "What I can go round in a day is a good deal of land!"

The head man laughed.

"It's all yours," said he. "Only one stipulation: if you don't come back within the day to the place from which you started, your money is lost."

"But how," says Pakhom, "can I mark where I am going?"

"Well, we'll stand on the place where it pleases you; we will be standing there; and you shall go and draw the circle, and take with you a hoe, and make a mark wherever you please; at the angle dig a little hole, put some turf in it; and we will go over it, from hole to hole, with the plow. Make your circle as large as you like, only at sunset you must be back at that place from which you set out. All that you encircle is yours."

Pakhom was delighted. They agreed to go out early. They talked it over, drank still more kumys, ate the mutton, and drank some more tea. It approached nightfall. They arranged for Pakhom to sleep in a down-bed, and the Bashkirs went off. They agreed to come together at early dawn the next day, and to go out at sunrise.

VII

Pakhom lay in his down-bed; and there he could not sleep, all on account of thinking of his land.

"I will get hold of a great tract," said he to himself. "I can go over fifty versts in one day. A day now is worth a year. There'll be a good bit of land in a circle of fifty versts. I will sell off the worst parts, or let it to the muzhiks; and I will pick out what I like, and I will settle on it. I will have a two-ox plow, and I will take

two men as laborers. I will cultivate fifty desyatins, and I will pasture my cattle on the rest."

Pakhom did not get a wink of sleep all night. Just before dawn he dropped into a doze. He just dropped into a doze and had a dream. He seemed to see himself lying in this very same kibitka, and listening to somebody cackling outside. And it seemed to him that he wanted to see who was laughing; and he got up and went out of the kibitka, and lo! that very same head man of the Bashkirs was sitting in front of the kibitka, and was holding his sides, and roaring and cackling about something.

He went up to him and asked:—

"What are you laughing at?"

And then it seemed to him that it was no longer the head man of the Bashkirs, but the peddler who had come to him and told him about the land.

And as soon as he saw that it was the peddler, he asked:—

"Have you been here long?"

And then it was no longer the peddler, but that muzhik who had come down the Volga so long ago.

And Pakhom saw that it was not the muzhik either, but the Devil himself, with horns and hoofs, sitting and laughing; and before him was lying a man barefooted, in shirt and drawers. And Pakhom looked more attentively to find out who the man was.

And he saw that the dead man was none other than —himself! Pakhom was frightened, and woke up.

He woke up.

"What was I dreaming about?" he asked himself. He looked around, he peered out of the closed door: it was already getting light, day was beginning to dawn.

"The people must be getting up," he thinks; "it's time to start."

Pakhom arose, aroused his man in the tarantas, told him to harness up, and then went to arouse the Bashkirs.

"Time," says he, "to go out on the steppe, to measure it off."

The Bashkirs got up, all collected; and the head man came forth. The Bashkirs again began by drinking kumys; they wished Pakhom to treat them to tea, but he was not inclined to delay.

"If we go .... it is time to go now," said he.

VIII

The Bashkirs made ready; some got on horseback, some climbed into carts; they started. And Pakhom rode with his man in their tarantas, and took with him a hoe. They rode out into the steppe; the dawn was beginning. They reached a mound — *shikhan* in Bashkirian. They descended from their carts, dismounted from their horses, collected in a crowd. The chief man came to Pakhom, and pointed with his hand.

"Here," says he, "all is ours, as far as you can see. Take what you desire."

Pakhom's eyes burned. The whole region was grassy, flat as the palm of your hand, black as a pot; and where there was a hollow, it was filled with grass as high as one's breast.

The chief man took off his foxskin cap, and laid it on the ground.

"Here," says he, "is the spot. Start from here, come back here. All that you go round shall be yours."

Pakhom took out his money, laid it in the cap; took off his kaftan, stood in his blouse[1] alone; girded himself around the belly with his sash, pulled it tighter; hung round his neck a little bag with bread, put a little flask with water into his belt, tightened his leg-wrappers, took the hoe from his man, and got ready to start.

He pondered and pondered on which side to take it; it was good everywhere.

He said to himself: —

"It 's all one; I will go toward the sunrise."

[1] *Poddyovka*, a sort of half kaftan.

He faced toward the east and paced back and forth, waiting till the sun should show above the horizon.

He said to himself, "I will not lose any time. It's cool, and easier to walk."

As soon as the sunlight gushed out over the horizon, he threw his hoe over his shoulder, and started out on the steppe.

Pakhom proceeded neither slow nor fast. He went about a verst;[1] he halted and he dug a little pit and piled the turf in it, so that it might attract attention.

He went farther. As he went on, he quickened his pace. As he kept going on, he dug other little pits.

Pakhom looked around. The shikhan was still in sight in the sun, and the people were standing on it; the tires on the tarantas wheels glistened. Pakhom conjectured that he has been five versts. He began to get warm; he took off his blouse, threw it over his shoulder, and went on. It grew hot. He looked at the sun.[2] It was already breakfast-time.

"One stage over," thinks Pakhom, "and four of them make a day; it's too early as yet to turn round. Only let me take off my boots."

He sat down and took off his boots, put them in his belt, and went on. It was easy walking. He said to himself, "Let me go five versts farther, then I will swing round to the left. This place is very good; it's a pity to give it up."

The farther he went, the better it became. He still went straight ahead. He looked round — the shikhan was now scarcely visible; and the people, like little ants, made a black spot on it; and something barely glistened.

"Well," said Pakhom, "I have enough in this direction; I must be turning round. I am sweaty enough. I should like a drink."

He halted, dug a pit, filled it with turf, unfastened his flask, took a drink, and turned sharply to the left. He went and went — the grass was deep, and it was hot.

[1] Thirty-five hundred feet.

[2] Russian, *solnuishko*, little sun.

Pakhom began to feel weary; he looked at the sun and saw that it was dinner-time.

"Well," said he, "I must have a rest."

Pakhom halted. He sat down and ate his bread and water, but did not try to lie down. He said to himself: —

"If I lie down, I may fall asleep."

He sat a little while; then he started on again; he found it easy walking; his strength was renewed by his meal, but now it was growing very hot — yes, and the sun began to decline; but still he kept going. He said: —

"Endure it for an hour, and you have an age to live."

He still went on a long distance in this direction. He kept intending to turn to the left, but lo! it was a low land and a moist soil. It was a pity to throw it away! He said to himself: —

"This day has been a good one."

He still continued straight on. He took in the low land — dug his pit on the farther side of the low land, the hollow, and then turned the second corner.

Pakhom gazed back in the direction of the shikhan. The heat had caused a haziness, there was a quivering in the atmosphere, and through the haziness the people on the shikhan could scarcely be seen.

"Well," said Pakhom, "I have taken long sides — I must make this one shorter."

He started on the third side — he tried to hasten his pace. He looked at the sun — it was already far down the west, and on the third side he had only gone two versts; and back to the starting-point, there were fifteen versts.

"No," he said, "even though the tract should be uneven I must hurry back in a straight line. It would n't do to take too much; even as it is, I have already a good deal of land."

Pakhom dug his little pit in all haste, and headed straight for the shikhan.

IX

Pakhom went straight toward the shikhan, and now it began to be heavy work for him. He was bathed in sweat; and his bare legs were cut and torn, and began to fail under him. He felt a desire to rest, but it was impossible; he could not stop till sunset. The sun did not delay, but was sinking lower and lower.

"Akh!" he says to himself, "can I have made a blunder? can I have taken too much? why don't you hurry along faster?"

He gazed at the shikhan — it gleamed in the sun; it was still a long distance to the place, and the sun was now not far from the horizon.

Still Pakhom hurried on; it was hard for him, but he kept quickening his pace, quickening his pace. He walked and walked — it was still always far away. He took to the double-quick. He threw away his blouse, his boots, his flask. He threw away his cap, but he clung to his hoe and helped himself along with it.

"Akh!" he said to himself, "I was too greedy; I have ruined the whole business; I shall not get there before sunset."

And his breath began to fail him all the worse because of his apprehension. Pakhom ran — his shirt and drawers clung to his body by reason of sweat — his mouth was parched. In his breast a pair of blacksmith's bellows, as it were, were working; and in his heart a mill was beating; and his legs were almost breaking down under him.

It became painful for Pakhom. He said to himself: —

"Suppose I should die from the strain?"

He was afraid of dropping dead, and yet he could not stop.

"If after running, I were to stop now, they would call me a fool."

He ran and ran. He was now getting near, and he could hear the Bashkirs shouting — screaming at him; and their screams made his heart pain him more than ever.

Pakhom ran on with the last of his strength, and the sun was still hovering on the horizon's edge; it went into

the haze; there was a great glow, red as blood. Now — now it was setting! The sun had nearly set, but now Pakhom was not far from the place. He could see it; and the people on the shikhan gesticulating to him, urging him on. He saw the foxskin cap on the ground, he could even see the money in it. And he saw the head man sitting on the ground, holding his belly with his hands. And Pakhom remembered his dream.

"Much land," he said to himself, "but perhaps God has not willed me to live on it. Okh! I have ruined myself," he thinks. "I shall not get it."

Pakhom looked at the sun, but the sun had gone down under the earth; its body was already hidden, and its last segment had disappeared under the horizon.

Pakhom exerted his last energies, threw himself forward with his body; his legs just kept him from falling.

Just as Pakhom reached the shikhan, it suddenly grew dark. He saw that the sun had gone. Pakhom groaned.

"I have lost my labor," thinks he. He was just about to stop; but as he still heard the Bashkirs all screaming, he remembered that he was below them, and therefore the sun seemed to have set, although it had not set to those on top of the shikhan. Pakhom took a breath and ran up the shikhan. It was still light on the mound. Pakhom ran, and there was the cap. In front of the cap sat the head man, laughing and holding his sides.

Pakhom remembered his dream, groaned "Akh!" his legs gave way under him, and he fell forward, reaching out his arms toward the cap.

"Ai! brave lad!" shouted the head man. "You have got a good piece of land."

Pakhom's man ran to him, attempted to help him to his feet; but from his mouth poured a stream of blood, and he lay dead.

The Bashkirs clucked with their tongues, expressing their sorrow.

Pakhom's man took the hoe, dug a grave for him, made it just long enough, from head to foot, — three arshins,[1] — and buried him.

[1] About seven feet.

THE GODSON

CHAPTER I

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." — MATT. v. 38, 39.
"Vengeance is mine; I will repay." — ROM. xii. 19.

A SON was born to a poor muzhik. The muzhik was glad; went to invite a neighbor to be his godfather. The neighbor declined. People are not eager to stand as godparents to a poor muzhik. The poor muzhik went to another; this one also declined.

He went through all the village: no one was willing to stand as godfather. The muzhik went to the next village. And a passer-by happened to meet him as he was going. The passer-by stopped.

"Good-morning," said he, "little muzhik,[1] whither doth God lead you?"

"The Lord," says the muzhik, "has given me a little child, as a care during infancy, as a consolation for old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. But, because I am poor, no one in our village will stand as godfather. I am trying to find a godfather."

And the passer-by said: —

"Take me for his godfather."

The muzhik was glad, thanked the passer-by, and said: —

"Whom now can I get for godmother?"

"Well, for godmother," said the passer-by, "invite the storekeeper's daughter. Go into town; on the mar-

[1] *Muzhichok.*

ket-place is a stone house with shops; as you go into the house, ask the merchant to let his daughter be godmother."

The muzhik had some misgivings.

"How, godfather elect," says he, "can I go to a merchant, a rich man? He will scorn me; he won't let his daughter go."

"That's not for you to worry about. Go ask him. Be ready to-morrow morning. I will come to the christening."

The poor muzhik returned home; went to the city, to the merchant's. He reined up his horse in the dvor. The merchant himself came out.

"What is needed?" he asked.

"Look here, Mr. Merchant.[1] The Lord has given me a little child, as a care during infancy, as a consolation for old age, and to pray for my soul when I am dead. Pray, let your daughter be his godmother."

"But when is the christening?"

"To-morrow morning."

"Well; very good. God be with you! she shall come to-morrow to the mass."

On the next day the godmother came; the godfather also came; they christened the child. As soon as they had christened the child, the godfather went off, and they knew not who he was. And they did not see him from that time forth.

CHAPTER II

The lad began to grow, to the delight of his parents; and he was strong and industrious, and intelligent and gentle. He reached the age of ten. His parents had him taught to read and write. What others took five years to learn, this lad learned in one year. And there was nothing left for him to learn.

Holy Week came. The lad went to his godmother,

[1] *Da vot gospodin kupyets.*

gave her the usual Easter salutation,[1] returned home, and asked: —

"Batyushka and matushka,[2] where does my godfather live? I should like to go to him, to give him Easter greetings."

And the father said to him: —

"We know not, my dear little son, where thy godfather lives. We ourselves are sorry about it. We have not seen him since the day when he was at thy christening. And we have not heard of him, and we know not where he lives; we know not whether he is alive."

The son bowed low to his father, to his mother: —

"Let me go, batyushka and matushka, and find my godfather. I wish to go to him and exchange Easter greetings."

The father and the mother let their son go. And the boy set forth to find his godfather.

CHAPTER III

THE lad set forth from home, and walked along the highway. He walked half a day; a passer-by met him. The passer-by halted.

"Good-afternoon, lad," said he; "whither does God lead thee?"

And the boy replied, "I went," says he, "to my dear godmother,[3] to give her Easter greetings. I went back home. I asked my parents where my godfather lived; I wished to exchange Easter greetings with him. My parents said, 'We know not, little son, where thy godfather lives. From the day when he was at thy christening, he has been gone from us; and we know nothing about him, and we know not whether he is alive.' And I had a desire to see my godfather, and so I am on my way to find him."

[1] A kiss with the words, *Khristos voskres.* This custom is universal among the peasantry. The person saluted replies, *Vostinu voskres* — Risen indeed.

[2] Little father and mother.

[3] *Matushka krestnaya.*

And the passer-by said: —

"I am thy godfather."

The lad was delighted and exchanged Easter greetings with his godfather.

"And where," said he, "dear godfather,[1] art thou preparing to go now? If in our direction, then come to our house; but if to thy own house, then I will go with thee."

And the godfather said: —

"I have not time now to go to thy house; I have business in the villages. But I shall be at home to morrow. Then come to me."

"But how, batyushka, shall I get to thee?"

"Well, then, go always toward the sunrise, always straight ahead. Thou wilt reach a forest; thou wilt see in the midst of the forest a clearing. Sit down in this clearing, rest, and notice what there may be there. Thou wilt come through the forest; thou wilt see a park, and in the park a palace with a golden roof. That is my house. Go up to the gates. I myself will meet thee there."

Thus said the godfather, and disappeared from his godson's eyes.

CHAPTER IV

The lad went as his godfather had bidden him. He went and he went; he reached the forest. He walked into the clearing, and sees in the midst of the meadow a pine tree, and on the pine tree a rope fastened to a branch, and on the rope an oaken log weighing three puds.[2] And under the log was a trough with honey.

While the boy was pondering why the honey was put there, and why the log was hung, he heard a crackling in the forest, and he saw some bears coming, — a she-bear in advance, behind her a yearling, and then three young cubs. The she-bear stretched out her nose, and marched straight for the trough, and

[1] *Batyushka krestnui.* [2] 108.33 pounds.

the young bears after her. The she-bear thrust her snout into the honey. She called her cubs: the cubs gamboled up to her, pressed up to the trough. The log swung off a little, came back, jostled the cubs. The she-bear saw it, and pushed the log with her paw. The log swung off a little farther, again came back, struck in the midst of the cubs, one on the back, one on the head.

The cubs began to whine, and jumped away. The she-bear growled, clutched the log with both paws above her head, pushed it away from her. The log flew high. The yearling bounded up to the trough, thrust his snout into the honey, and began to munch; and the others to come up again. They had not time to get there before the log returned, struck the yearling in the head, and killed him with the blow.

The she-bear growled more fiercely than before, clutched the log, and pushed it up with all her might. The log flew higher than the branch; even the rope slackened. The she-bear went to the trough, and all the cubs behind her. The log flew, flew up; stopped, fell back. The lower it falls, the swifter it falls. It goes very swiftly; it flew back toward the she-bear. It struck her a tremendous blow on the pate. The she-bear rolled over, stretched out her legs, and breathed her last. The cubs ran away.

CHAPTER V

THE lad was amazed, and went farther. He came to a great park, and in the park was a lofty palace with a golden roof. And at the gate stood the godfather, smiling. The godfather greeted his godson, led him through the gate, and brought him into the park. Never even in dreams had the lad dreamed of such beauty and bliss as there were in that park.

The godfather led the lad into the palace. The palace was still better. The godfather led the lad through all the apartments. Each was better than the

other, each more festive than the other; and he led him to a sealed door.

"Seest thou this door?" said he. "There is no key to it, only a seal. It can be opened, but I forbid thee. Live and roam wherever thou pleasest, and as thou pleasest. Enjoy all these pleasures; only one thing is forbidden thee. Enter not this door. But, if thou shouldst enter, then remember what thou sawest in the forest."

The godfather said this, and went. The godson was left alone, and began to live. And it was so festive and joyful, that it seemed to him that he had lived there only three hours, whereas he lived there thirty years.

And after thirty years had passed, the godson came to the sealed door, and began to ponder.

"Why did my godfather forbid me to go into this chamber? Let me go and see what is there."

He gave the door a push; the seals fell off; the door opened. The godson entered, and saw an apartment, larger than the rest, and finer than the rest; and in the midst of the apartment stood a golden throne.

The godson walked, walked through the apartment, and came to the throne, mounted the steps, and sat down. He sat down, and he saw a scepter lying by the throne.

The godson took the scepter into his hands. As soon as he took the scepter into his hands, instantly all the four walls of the apartment fell away. The godson gazed around him, and saw the whole world, and all that men were doing in the world.

He looked straight ahead: he saw the sea, and ships sailing on it. He looked toward the right: he saw foreign, non-Christian nations living. He looked toward the left side: there lived Christians, but not Russians. He looked toward the fourth side: there live our Russians.

"Now," said he, "I will look, and see what is doing at home — if the grain is growing well."

He looked toward his own field, and saw the sheaves

standing. He began to count the sheaves [to see] whether there would be much grain; and he saw a telyega driving into the field, and a muzhik sitting in it.

The godson thought that it was his sire come by night to gather his sheaves. He looked; it was the thief, Vasili Kudriashof, coming. He went to the sheaves and began to lay hands upon them. The godson was provoked. He cried:—

"Batyushka, they are stealing sheaves in the field!"

His father woke in the night.

"I dreamed," said he, "that they were stealing sheaves. I am going to see."

He mounted his horse and rode off.

He came to the field; he saw Vasili; he shouted to the muzhiks. Vasili was beaten. They took him and carried him off to jail.

The godson looked at the city where his godmother used to live. He saw that she was married to a merchant. And she was in bed, asleep; but her husband was up; he had gone to his mistress. The godson shouted to the merchant's wife:—

"Get up! thy husband is engaged in bad business."

The godmother jumped out of bed, dressed herself, found where her husband was, upbraided him, beat the mistress, and refused to have anything more to do with her husband.

Once more the godson looked toward his mother, and saw that she was lying down in the izba, and a robber was sneaking in, and beginning to break open the chests.

His mother awoke, and screamed. The robber noticed it, seized an ax, brandished it over the mother, and was about to kill her.

The godson could not restrain himself but let fly the scepter at the robber, struck him straight in the temple, and killed him on the spot.

CHAPTER VI

THE instant the godson killed the robber, the walls closed again, the apartment became what it was.

The door opened, the godfather entered. The godfather came to his son, took him by the hand, drew him from the throne, and said: —

"Thou hast not obeyed my command: one evil deed thou hast done, — thou openedst the sealed door; a second evil deed thou hast done, — thou hast mounted the throne, and taken my scepter into thy hand; a third evil deed thou hast done, — thou hast added much to the wickedness in the world. If thou hadst sat there an hour longer, thou wouldst have ruined half of the people."

And again the godfather led his son to the throne, and took the scepter in his hands. And again the walls were removed, and all things became visible.

And the godfather said: —

"Look now at what thou hast done to thy father. Vasili has now been in jail a year; he has learned all the evil that there is; he has become perfectly desperate. Look! now he has stolen two of thy father's horses, and thou seest how he has set fire to the dvor. This is what thou hast done to thy father."

As soon as the godson saw that his father's house was on fire, his godfather shut it from him, commanded him to look in the other direction.

"Here," says he, "it has been a year since thy godmother's husband deserted his wife; he gads about with others, all astray; and she, out of grief, has taken to drink; and his former mistress has gone wholly to the bad. This is what thou hast done to thy godmother."

The godfather also hid this, and pointed to his house. And he saw his mother: she was weeping over her sins; she repented, saying: —

"Better had it been for the robber to have killed me, for then I should not have fallen into such sins."

"This is what thou hast done to thy mother."

The godfather hid this also, and pointed down. And the godson saw the robber; two guards were holding the robber before the dungeon.

And the godfather said: —

"This man had taken nine lives. He ought himself to have atoned for his sins. But thou hast killed him: thou hast taken all his sins upon thyself. This is what thou hast done unto thyself. The she-bear pushed the log once, it disturbed her cubs; she pushed it a second time, it killed her yearling; but the third time that she pushed it, it killed herself. So has it been with thee. I give thee now thirty years' grace. Go out into the world, atone for the robber's sins. If thou dost not atone for them, thou must go in his place."

And the godson asked: —

"How shall I atone for his sins?"

And the godfather said: —

"When thou hast undone as much evil as thou hast done in the world, then thou wilt have atoned for thy sins, and the sins of the robber."

And the godson asked: —

"How undo the evil that is in the world?"

The godfather said: —

"Go straight toward the sunrise. Thou wilt reach a field, men in it. Notice what the men are doing, and teach them what thou knowest. Then go farther, notice what thou seest: thou wilt come on the fourth day to a forest; in the forest is a cell, in the cell lives a hermit; tell him all that has taken place. He will instruct thee. When thou hast done all that the hermit commands thee, then thou wilt have atoned for thy sins, and the sins of the robber."

Thus spoke the godfather, and let the godson out of the gate.

CHAPTER VII

The godson went on his way. As he walked he said to himself: —

"How can I undo the evil that is in the world? Is

evil destroyed in the world by banishing men into banishment, by putting them in prison, by executing them? How can I go to work to destroy evil, to say nothing of taking on one the sins of others?"

The godson thought and thought, but could not think it out. He went and went; he came to a field. In the field the grain had come up good and thick, and it was harvest-time. The godson saw that a little heifer had strayed into this grain, and the men had mounted their horses, and were hunting the little heifer through the grain, from one side to the other. Just as soon as the little heifer tried to escape from the grain, some one would ride up and frighten the little heifer back into the grain again. And again they would gallop after it through the grain. And on one side stood a peasant woman, weeping.

"They are running my little heifer," she said.

And the godson began to ask the muzhiks: —

"Why do you so? All of you ride out of the grain! Let the woman[1] herself call out the heifer."

The men obeyed. The woman went to the edge, began to call, "Co', boss, co', boss."[2]

The little heifer pricked up her ears, listened, listened, ran to her mistress, thrust her nose under her skirt, almost knocked her off her legs. And the muzhiks were glad, and the peasant woman was glad, and the little heifer was glad.

The godson went farther, and said to himself: —

"Now I see that evil is increased by evil. The more men chase evil, the more evil they make. It is impossible, of course, to destroy evil by evil. But how destroy it? I know not. It was good, the way the little heifer listened to its mistress. But suppose it had n't listened, how would they have got it out?"

The godson pondered, could think of nothing, and so went on his way.

[1] *Khozyaïka.*

[2] *Tpriusi, tpriusi, buryonotchka, tpriusi, tpriusi!* *Buryonotchka* is the diminutive of a word meaning nut-brown cow.

CHAPTER VIII

He went and went. He came to a village. He asked for a night's lodging at the last izba. The woman of the house[1] consented. There was no one in the izba except the woman, who was washing up.

The godson went in, climbed on top of the oven, and began to watch what the woman was doing; he saw that she was scrubbing the izba; she began to rub the table, she scrubbed the table; she proceeded to wipe it with a dirty towel. She was ready to wipe off one side — but the table was not cleaned. Streaks of dirt were left on the table from the dirty towel. She was ready to wipe it on the other side; while she rubbed out some streaks, she made others. She began again to rub it from end to end. Again the same thing. She daubed it with the dirty towel. She destroyed one spot, but she made another. The godson watched and watched; and he said: —

"What are you doing, little mistress?"

"Why, dost not see?" she asked. "I am cleaning up for Easter. But here, I can't clean my table; it's all dirty. I 'm all spent."

"If you would rinse out your towel," said he, "then you could wipe it off."

The woman did so; she quickly cleaned off the table.

"Thank thee," says she, "for telling me how."

In the morning the godson bade good-by to the woman of the house and started on his way. He went and he went and he came to a forest. He saw muzhiks bending hoops. The godson came up, saw the muzhiks; but the hoop would not stay bent.

The godson looked and noticed that the muzhiks' block was loose. There was no support in it. The godson looked on, and said: —

"What are you doing, brothers?"

"We are bending hoops; and twice we have steamed them: we are all spent; they will not bend."

[1] *Khozyaïka.*

"Well, now, brothers, just fasten your block; then you will make it stay bent."

The muzhiks heeded what he said, fastened the block, and their work went in tune.

The godson spent the night with them and then went on his way. All day and all night he walked; just before dawn he met some drovers. He lay down near them, and he noticed the drovers had halted their cattle, and were struggling with a fire. They had taken dry twigs and lighted them, but they did not allow them to get well started, but piled the fire with wet brushwood. The brushwood began to hiss; the fire went out. The drovers took more dry stuff, kindled it, again piled on the wet brushwood. Again it went out. They struggled long, but could not kindle the fire.

And the godson said: —

"Don't be in such haste to put on the brushwood, but first start a nice little fire. When it burns up briskly, then pile on."

Thus the drovers did. They started a powerful fire, and laid on the brushwood. The brushwood caught, the pile burned. The godson stayed a little while with them, and went farther, and he pondered and pondered, but could not tell for what purpose he had seen these three things.

CHAPTER IX

The godson went and went. A day went by. He came to a forest; in the forest was a cell. The godson went to the cell and knocked. A voice from the cell asked: —

"Who is there?"

"A great sinner; I come to atone for the sins of another."

The hermit came forth, and asked: —

"What are these sins that thou bearest for another?"

The godson told him all, — about his godfather, and about the she-bear and her cubs, and about the throne

in the sealed apartment, and about his godfather's prohibition; and how he had seen the muzhiks in the field, how they trampled down all the grain, and how the little heifer came of her own accord to her mistress.

"I understood," says he, "that it is impossible to destroy evil by evil; but I cannot understand how to destroy it. Teach me."

And the hermit said: —

"But tell me what more thou hast seen on thy way."

The godson told him about the peasant woman, — how she scrubbed; and about the muzhiks, — how they made hoops; and about the herdsmen, — how they lighted the fire.

The hermit listened, returned to his cell, brought out a dull hatchet.

"Come with me," says he.

The hermit went to a clearing away from the cell, and pointed to a tree.

"Cut it down," said he.

The godson cut it down; the tree fell.

"Now cut it into three lengths."

The godson cut it into three lengths. The hermit returned to the cell again and brought some fire.

"Now," said he, "burn these three logs."

The godson made a fire, burned the three logs. There remained three firebrands.

"Half bury them in the earth. This way."

The godson buried them.

"Thou seest the river at the foot of the mountain? Bring hither water in thy mouth, water them. Water this firebrand just as thou didst teach the baba; water this one as thou didst instruct the hoop-makers; and water this one as thou didst instruct the herdsmen. When all three shall have sprouted, and three apple trees sprung from the firebrands, then wilt thou know how evil is destroyed in men; then thou shalt atone for thy sins."

The hermit said this, and returned to his cell.

The godson pondered and pondered; but he could

not comprehend the meaning of what the hermit had said. But he decided to do what he had commanded him.

CHAPTER X

THE godson went to the river, "took prisoner" a mouthful of water, poured it on the firebrand. He went again and again. He also watered the other two. The godson grew weary and wanted something to eat. He went to the hermit's cell to ask for food. He opened the door, and the hermit was lying dead on a bench. The godson looked round and found some biscuits, and ate them. He found also a spade, and began to dig a grave for the hermit. At night he brought water, watered the brands, and by day he dug the grave. As soon as he had dug the grave, he was anxious to bury the hermit; people came from the village, bringing food for the hermit.

The people learned how the hermit had died, and had ordained the godson to take his place. The people helped bury the hermit, they left bread for the godson, they promised to bring more, and departed.

And the godson remained to live in the hermit's place, and the godson lived there, subsisting on what people brought him, and he fulfilled what was told him, — bringing water in his mouth from the river, and watering the brands.

Thus lived the godson for a year, and many people began to come to him. The fame of him went forth, that there was living in the forest a holy man, that he was working out his salvation by bringing water in his mouth from the river at the foot of the mountain, that he was watering the burned stumps. Many people began to come to him. And rich merchants began to come, bringing him gifts. The godson took nothing for himself, save what was necessary; but whatever was given him, he distributed among other poor people.

And thus the godson continued to live: half of the

day he brought water in his mouth and watered the brands; and the other half he rested, and received the people.

And the godson began to think that this was the way he had been commanded to live, and that thus he would destroy sin, and atone for his sins.

Thus the godson lived a second year, and he never let a single day pass without putting on water; but as yet not a single brand had sprouted.

One time as he was sitting in his cell he heard a man riding past on horseback, and singing songs. The godson went out to see what kind of a man it was. He saw a strong young man. His clothes were good, and his horse and the saddle on which he sat were rich.

The godson stopped him, and asked who he was, and where he was going.

The man halted.

"I am a robber," said he. "I ride along the highways, I kill men; the more men I kill, the gayer songs I sing."

The godson was horror-struck, and he asked himself: —

"How destroy the evil in this man? It is good for me to speak to those who come to me, for they are repentant. But this man boasts of his wickedness."

The godson said nothing, but, as he started to go off, he thought: —

"Now, how to act? If this cutthroat gets into the habit of riding by this way, he will frighten everybody; people will cease coming to me. And there will be no advantage to them, — yes, and then how shall I live?"

And the godson stopped. And he spoke to the highwayman.

"People come to me here," said he, "not to boast of their wickedness, but to repent, and put their sins away through prayer. Repent thou also, if thou fearest God; but if thou dost not desire to repent, then get thee hence, and never return, trouble me not, and frighten not the people from coming to me. And if thou dost not obey, God will punish thee."

The cutthroat jeered: —

"I am not afraid of God," said he, "nor will I obey you. You are not my master.[1] You get your living by your piety," said he, "and I get my living by robbery. We must all get a living. Teach the peasant women that come to thee, but read me no lecture. And as for what you say about God, to-morrow I will kill two men more than usual. And I would kill you to-day, but I do not wish to soil my hands. But henceforth don't come into my way."

This threat the cutthroat uttered and rode off. But he came by no more, and the godson lived in his former style comfortably for eight years.

CHAPTER XI

One time — it was at night — the godson went out to water his brands; he returned to his cell to rest, and he sat looking up and down the road, if any people should soon be coming. And on that day not a soul came. The godson sat alone by his door until evening; and it seemed lonely, and he began to think about his life. He remembered how the cutthroat had reproached him for getting his living by his piety, and the godson reviewed his life.

"I am not living," he said to himself, "as the hermit commanded me to live. The hermit imposed a penance on me, and I am getting from it bread and reputation among the people; and so led away have I been by it, that I am lonely when people do not come to me. And when the people come, then my only joy consists in the fact that they praise my holiness. It is not right to live so. I have been seduced by my popularity among the people. I have not atoned for my former sins, but I have incurred fresh ones. I will go into the forest, to another place, so that the people may not come to me. I will live alone, so as to atone for my former sins, and not incur new ones."

Thus reasoned the godson; and he took a little bag

[1] *Khozyaïn.*

of biscuits and his spade, and went away from the cell into a ravine, so as to dig for himself a hut in a gloomy place, to hide from the people.

The godson was walking along with his little bag and his spade when the cutthroat overtook him. The godson was frightened, tried to run, but the cutthroat caught up with him.

"Where are you going?" said he.

The godson told him that he wanted to go away from people, to a place where no one would find him.

The cutthroat marveled.

"How will you live now, when people no longer will come to you?"

The godson had not thought of this before; but when the cutthroat asked him, he began to think about his sustenance.

"On what God will give," said he.

The highwayman said nothing, but rode on.

"Why was it," said the godson to himself, "that I said nothing to him about his life? Perhaps now he is repentant. To-day he seemed more subdued, and did not threaten to kill me."

And the godson shouted to the cutthroat: —

"But still it is needful for thee to repent. Thou wilt not escape from God."

The cutthroat wheeled his horse around, and, drawing a knife from his belt, shook it at the godson. The godson was frightened; he ran into the forest.

The cutthroat did not attempt to follow him, but only shouted: —

"Twice I have let you off; fall not in my hands a third time, else I will kill you!"

He said this, and rode off.

The godson went at eventide to water his brands; behold! one had put forth sprouts, an apple tree was growing from it.

CHAPTER XII

THE godson hid from the people, and began to live alone. His biscuits were used up.

"Well," he said to himself, "now I will seek for roots."

But, as he began his search, he saw, hanging on a bough, a little bag of biscuits. The godson took it, and began to eat.

As soon as his biscuits were gone, again another little bag came, on the same branch. And thus the godson lived. He had only one grievance: he was afraid of the cutthroat. As soon as he heard the cutthroat, he would hide himself; he would think: —

"He will kill me, and I shall not have time to atone for my sins."

Thus he lived for ten years more. One apple tree grew, and thus there remained two firebrands as firebrands.

Once the godson arose betimes and proceeded to fulfil his task; he soaked the earth around the firebrands, but he became weary, and sat down to rest.

He sat down, and while he was resting he said to himself: —

"I have done wrong because I have been afraid of death. If it please God, I may thus atone even by death for my sins."

Even while these thoughts were passing through his mind, suddenly he heard the cutthroat coming; he was cursing.

The godson listened, and he said: —

"Without God, no evil and no good can come to me from any one."

And he went out to meet the cutthroat. He saw that the cutthroat was not riding alone, but had a man behind him on the saddle. And the man's hands and mouth were tied up. The man was silent, but the cutthroat was railing at him.

The godson went out to the cutthroat, and stood in front of the horse.

"Where," said he, "art thou taking this man?"

"I am taking him into the forest. This is a merchant's son. He will not tell where his father's money is hidden. I am going to thrash him until he will tell."

And the cutthroat started to ride on. But the godson would not allow it; he seized the horse by the bridle.

"Let this man go," said he.

The cutthroat was wroth with the godson and threatened him.

"Do you desire this?" he exclaimed. "I promise you I will kill you. Out of the way!"

The godson was not intimidated.

"I will not get out of thy way," said he. "I fear thee not. I fear God only. And God bids me not let thee go. Unloose the man."

The cutthroat scowled, drew out his knife, cut the cords, let the merchant's son go free.

"Off with you," says he, "both of you! and don't cross my path a second time."

The merchant's son jumped down and made off, and the cutthroat started to ride on, but the godson still detained him. He began to urge him to reform his evil life. The cutthroat stood still, heard every word; but he made no reply, and rode off.

The next morning the godson went to water his firebrands. Behold! the second one had sprouted — another apple tree was growing.

CHAPTER XIII

Ten years more passed.

One time the godson was sitting down, he had no desires and he had no fear, and his heart was glad within him. And he said to himself:

"What blessings men receive from God! but they torment themselves in vain. They ought to live and enjoy their lives."

And he remembered all the wickedness of men — how they torment themselves. And he felt sorry for them.

"Here I am," he said to himself, "living idly. I must go out and tell people what I know."

Even while he was pondering, he heard the cutthroat coming. He was about to let him pass; for he thought:—

"Whatever I say to him, he will not accept."

This was his first thought; but then he reconsidered it, and went out on the road. The cutthroat was riding by in moody silence; his eyes were on the ground.

The godson gazed at him, and he felt sorry for him; he drew near to him and seized him by the knee.

"Dear brother," said he, "have pity on thine own soul. Lo! the Spirit of God is in thee. Thou tormentest thyself, and others thou tormentest; and thou wilt be tormented still more grievously. But God loves thee so! With what bounty has He blessed thee! Ruin not thyself, brother! change thy life."

The cutthroat frowned, and he turned away.

"Out of my way!" he exclaimed.

The godson clutched the cutthroat's knee more firmly, and burst into tears.

The cutthroat raised his eyes to the godson. He looked and he looked, and then, dismounting from his horse, he fell on his knees before the godson.

"You have conquered me, old man," he cried. "Twenty years have I struggled with you. You have won me over. I have henceforth no power over you. Do with me as it seems to you good. When you spoke to me the first time," said he, "I only did the more evil. And your words made an impression on me only when you went away from men, and I learned that you gained no advantage from men."

And the godson remembered that the peasant woman succeeded in cleaning her table only after she had rinsed out her towel. When he ceased to think about himself, his heart was purified, and he began to purify the hearts of others.

And the cutthroat said:—

"But my heart was changed within me only when you ceased to fear death."

And the godson remembered that the hoopmakers[1] only succeeded in bending their hoops after they had fastened their block: when he ceased to be afraid of death, he had fastened his life in God, and a disobedient heart became obedient.

And the cutthroat said:—

"But my heart melted entirely only when you pitied me and wept before me."

The godson was overjoyed; he led the cutthroat to the place where the firebrands had been.

They came to it, but out of the last firebrand also an apple tree had sprung!

And the godson remembered that the drovers' damp wood had kindled only when a great fire was built: when his own heart was well on fire, another's took fire from it.

And the godson was glad because now he had atoned for all his sins.

He told all this to the cutthroat, and died. The cutthroat buried him and began to live as the godson bade him, and thus became a teacher of men.

[1] *Obodchiki*, from *obod*, a felloe, or hoop.

SKAZKA

A STORY ABOUT IVAN THE FOOL AND HIS TWO BROTHERS, SEMYON THE WARRIOR AND TARAS THE POT-BELLIED, AND HIS DUMB SISTER, MALANYA, AND ABOUT THE OLD DEVIL AND THE THREE LITTLE DEVILS

(1885)

CHAPTER I

ONCE on a time a rich muzhik lived in a certain empire, in a certain kingdom. And the rich muzhik had three sons, — Semyon the warrior, Taras the pot-bellied, and Ivan the fool, — and a deaf and dumb daughter, Malanya the spinster.

Semyon the warrior went to war, to serve the Tsar; Taras the pot-bellied went to the city, to a merchant's, to engage in trade; but Ivan the fool[1] stayed at home with the girl, to work, and grow round-shouldered.

Semyon won high rank[2] and an estate, and married a nobleman's daughter. His pay was large, and his estate large, and yet he did not make ends meet: what the husband made, his wife, the lady, squandered with lavish hand; and they never had any money!

[1] Throughout this *skazka*, or folk-tale, the characteristic epithets of the muzhik's family are, for the most part, omitted in the translation. In Russian they are Semyon-voïn, Taras-briukhan, Ivan-durak, and Malanya-vyekoukha-nyemaya. The reader will have little difficulty in supplying them, either in Russian or English. It is interesting to remember, in respect to this tale, that it embodies Count Tolstoï's most radical teaching; and Count Tolstoï himself was amazed that the censor allowed it to pass, while the scientific expression of the same doctrine was tabooed.

[2] *Tchin.*

And Semyon went to his estate to collect his revenues. And the steward [1] said to him : —

" We have no way of getting any revenue ; we have neither cattle nor tools, nor horses nor cows, nor plows nor harrows. All these must be got ; then there will be an income."

And Semyon went to his father.

" Father," said he, " you are rich ; and yet you have given me nothing. Give me my third, and I will improve my estate with it."

And the old man said : —

" You have brought nothing to my house : why should I give you a third part. It would be unfair to Ivan and the girl."

But Semyon said : —

" Now, look here ; he is a fool, and she is a deaf and dumb old maid ; what do they need ? "

And the old man replied : —

" Be it as Ivan shall say."

But Ivan says : —

" All right, let him have it."

Semyon took his share from home, spent it on his estate, and went off again to the Tsar, to serve him.

The pot-bellied Taras also made much money ; he married into the merchant family, but still he had not enough. He went to his father, and said : —

" Give me my portion."

The old man did not want to give Taras his portion either.

Said he : " You have brought nothing to us ; but whatever is in the house, that Ivan has saved. And so we must not wrong him and the girl."

But Taras said : —

" What good does it do him ? he is a fool. He cannot marry, no one would have him. And the dumb girl does n't need anything either. — Ivan," said he, " give me half the grain, — I won't take the tools, — and of the live-stock I will take only the gray stallion ; he 's no good to you for plowing."

[1] *Prikashchik.*

Ivan laughed, and said: —

"All right; I will make a new start."

So they gave Taras his share.

Taras took the grain to the city; he took the gray stallion; and Ivan was left with one old mare, to toil like a peasant,[1] as before, and support his father and mother.

CHAPTER II

THE old devil was angry because the brothers had not quarreled over the division, but had parted amicably; and he summoned three devilkins.

"Look here," says he: "there are three brothers, Semyon the warrior, Taras the pot-bellied, and Ivan the fool. They all ought to be quarreling, but they live peaceably; they visit one another.[2] The fool has ruined the whole business for me. Now you three go and get hold of the three brothers, and stir them up, so that they will scratch one another's eyes out. Can you do this?"

"We can," said they.

"How will you do it?"

"Well, we shall do it this way: first, we 'll ruin them, so that they 'll have nothing to eat, and then tie them all together; and they will fall to fighting."

"Now, that 's capital," says he. "I see you know your business. Make haste, and don't you come back to me until you have set the three by the ears, otherwise I 'll skin you all alive."

The devilkins all went to a bog and began to plan how to undertake their task. They wrangled and wrangled, for each one wished to have the easiest part of the job to do; and at last they decided to cast lots for which one each should take; and if any of them should accomplish his work first, he should come to the aid of the others.

[1] *Krestyanstvovat'*, a verb made from the noun *krestyanin*, a peasant.

[2] Literally, they exchange bread-salt with one another.

So the devilkins cast lots, and set a time to meet again in a bog, to learn who had succeeded, and who needed help.

The time appointed came, and the devilkins met in the bog according to agreement. They proceeded to describe how matters stood. The first devilkin began to tell about Semyon the warrior.

"My work," said he, "is getting along well. To-morrow," said he, "my Semyon is going to his father."

His comrades began to ask: —

"How did you bring it about?"

"Well," said he, "in the first place, I inspired Semyon with such courage that he promised his Tsar to conquer the whole world; and the Tsar made Semyon his general-in-chief, and sent him to conquer the Tsar of India. They met for battle. That very night I wet all the powder in Semyon's army, and I went to the Tsar of India and I made a countless multitude of straw soldiers. Semyon's soldiers saw the straw soldiers surrounding them on all sides, and they were frightened. Semyon ordered them to fire but their cannon and guns did not go off. Semyon's soldiers were panic-struck, and ran like sheep; and the Tsar of India slaughtered them. Semyon was disgraced: his estate was confiscated, and to-morrow they intend to execute him. But I have only one day's work more with him. I have let him out of prison, so that he may run home. To-morrow I shall finish with him; so tell us which of you two needs help."

And the second devilkin — Taras's — began to tell about his affairs.

"I need no help," said he; "my job also has gone smoothly, and Taras will not hold out more than a week. In the first place," said he, "I caused his belly to grow, and filled him with envy. So covetous has he become of others' goods, that he wishes to buy everything he sees. He has spent all his money on a host of things, and still he keeps on buying. Now he has already begun to buy on credit. His debts hang already round his neck like a weight, and he has entangled himself so

that he can't get out of the tangle. At the end of a week his obligations will fall due, and I shall make rubbish of all of his wares. .... He won't be able to pay, and he will go home to his father."

They turned now to ask the third devilkin — Ivan's: —

"And how are you getting along?"

"Well," said he, "my affair does not get on well. In the first place, I spat into his jug of kvas, so as to give him the belly-ache; and I went to his field, stamped the ground as hard as a stone, so that he could not work it. I thought that he would not plow it; but he, the fool, came with his wooden plow,[1] began to work at it. His belly-ache made him groan, but he went on plowing. I broke one plow for him: he went home, exchanged it for another, bound with new withs,[2] and took up his plowing again. I crept under the soil and tried to hold back his plowshares; you could n't hold them back at all. He lays out all his strength on the plow, and the plowshares were sharp and cut my hands all up. He plowed almost the whole; only one little strip was left. Come, brothers, to my aid; for if we don't get the better of him, all our labor will be lost. If the fool is left, and is going to farm it,[3] they won't know want; he will support both his brothers."

Semyon's devilkin promised to come to his aid the next day, and the devilkins separated.

CHAPTER III

Ivan had plowed the whole fallow; only one narrow strip remained. He went out to finish it. His belly ached, but the plowing had to be done. He straightened the ropes, turned his plow, and started to plow.

[1] *Sokha.*

[2] *Podvoĭ;* these twisted withs are used to fasten the *obzhi*, or plow-tail, to the *rasokha*, or wooden cross-piece of the plow. The plow-foot is called the *poloz*, and the double iron share the *soshnik*. The Russians have also the word plow, *plūg:* it is a moot question whether it is a pure Slavonic word, or borrowed from the West.

[3] *Krestyanstvovat'*.

He had made only one furrow and was coming back, when it seemed to catch on a root and dragged. Now this was the devilkin, who had suddenly twisted his legs around the plowshare and was holding it.

"What a strange thing!" said Ivan to himself. "There were no roots here, but here's a root."

Ivan put his hand down into the furrow and felt something soft. He seized it, and pulled it out.

It was black, like a root; but on the root, something was wriggling. Lo! a live devilkin!

"Hey, there," said Ivan, "what a nasty thing!" and he lifted up his hand to dash it against the plow, when the devilkin began to whine.

"Don't strike me," said he, "but I will do for you whatever you wish."

"What will you do for me?"

"Only tell me what you wish."

Ivan scratched his head.

"My belly aches," said he; "can you cure it?"

"I can," said he.

"All right, cure it."

The devilkin bent down to the furrow; scratched about, scratched about with his claws; pulled out a little root, — a three-pronged root, — and gave it to Ivan.

"Here," said he; "whoever swallows this one little root, every pain will disappear."

Ivan took it, broke off the little root, and swallowed it. Immediately his belly[-ache] went away.

Again the devilkin begged.

"Let me go now," said he. "I will dive into the earth; I will never come again."

"All right. God be with you."

And the moment Ivan spoke of God, the devilkin plunged suddenly under the earth, like a stone in the water; only the hole was left.

Ivan put the two other little roots into his cap, and went on with his plowing. He plowed the strip to the end, turned over the sokha, and went home. He unharnessed, went into the izba, and found his elder

brother Semyon the warrior and his wife sitting at supper. His estate had been confiscated; he had broken out of prison, and had hurried home to his father to live.

Semyon saw Ivan.

"I have come," said he, "to live with you. Feed me and my wife until we find a new place."

"All right," said he; "live with us."

But as Ivan was about to sit down on the bench, the lady found the odor from him disgusting. She even said to her husband: —

"I cannot endure," said she, "to eat with a stinking muzhik."

And Semyon said: —

"My lady says you smell bad; you had better go out and eat in the entry."

"Very well," said he; "I must go out anyway to pasture the mare for the night."

Ivan took some bread and his kaftan, and went out for the night.

CHAPTER IV

That night Semyon's devilkin, having finished his job, went according to agreement to find Ivan's devilkin to help him subdue the fool.

He came to the field and there he searched and he searched for his comrade, but there was no sign of him anywhere — all he found was a hole.

"Well," he thought, "some ill has certainly befallen my comrade. I must take his place. The fallow has been all plowed. I shall have to subdue the fool in his hay-field."

The devilkin went to the meadow, and flooded Ivan's grass; all the hay-field was matted with mud. Ivan returned at dawn from the pasture, whetted his scythe, and went to mow the meadow. He began to mow. He swung his scythe once — he swung it twice — the scythe became so dull it would not cut at all — he had to

sharpen it. Ivan struggled and struggled. "It's no use," said he; "I am going home to get a whetstone and a slice of bread. Though I have to work a week, I won't give in till I mow it all."

The devilkin was listening; he said to himself:—

"This fool is a tough one; I shall not get him this way. We must try some other trick on him."

Ivan came back, sharpened his scythe, and began to mow. The devilkin crept into the grass, and kept catching the scythe by the heel, and thrusting the point into the ground. It was hard for Ivan, yet he kept on with his mowing; there remained only one patch[1] in the marsh. The devilkin crept into the marsh; thinks to himself: "Though I cut my paws, still I will not let him mow."

Ivan came to the marsh; the grass did not look thick, but it resisted the scythe. Ivan grew angry, began to mow with all his might; the devilkin had to give it up — he had n't time to leap away — he saw it was a bad business, and he jumped into a bush. Ivan was swinging his scythe, and, as he grazed the bush, he clipped off half of the devilkin's tail. Ivan finished mowing his field, bade the girl[2] rake it up, and went off to mow the rye.

He went out with his sickle, but the dock-tailed devilkin was there before him, and tangled up the rye, so that the sickle was useless. Ivan turned round, took his pruning-hook, and set about reaping; he reaped all the rye.

"Well, now," said he, "I must take hold of the oats."

The dock-tailed devilkin was listening; he thinks, "I did not get the better of him on the rye, so I must catch him on the oats; only wait till morning."

The devilkin hurried out in the morning to the oat-field, but the oats were already mowed. Ivan had mowed the field by night, in order that less grain might shake out.

The devilkin was enraged.

[1] *Delyanka*, generally a clearing in the woods.

[2] *Dyevka*, an unmarried girl; here the old maid **Malanya**.

"The fool," said he, "has hacked me and tortured me! I never saw such ill luck, even in war. The cursed fellow does not sleep; I can't get ahead of him. I am going now," said he, "to the grain-ricks; I will make them all rot for him."

And the devilkin went to the ricks of rye; he crept among the sheaves and they began to rot. He heated them, and got warm himself, and fell asleep.

But Ivan harnessed the mare, and went with the dumb girl to get them. They came to the ricks, began to pitch them up; he had pitched up two sheaves, and was just thrusting in his fork again, when the fork stuck straight into the devilkin's back; he lifted his fork — and lo! on the prongs was a live devilkin; yea, verily, with his tail cut short, and sprawling, wriggling, and trying to wriggle off.

"Hallo, there!" says he, "you nasty thing! Are you here again?"

"I," says he, "am another one; that was my brother. But I have been with your brother Semyon."

"Well," says Ivan, "whoever you are, you shall have the same treatment."

He was just going to dash him against the cart-rail, but the devilkin began to beseech him.

"Let me off," said he. "I won't do so any more, but I will do whatever you want me to."

"Well, what can you do?"

"Well," said he, "I can make soldiers out of anything you please."

"But what are they good for?"

"You can do anything with them you wish," said he. "They can do all things."

"Can they sing?"

"They can."

"Very good," said Ivan; "make some."

And the devilkin said: —

"Here, take this sheaf of rye; drag it over the ground, set it up, and merely say, 'Tis my slave's decree that thou shalt be a sheaf no more. Let every straw there is in thee a soldier be.'"

Ivan took the sheaf, dragged it over the ground, and repeated what the devilkin bade him say. And the sheaf fell asunder, and soldiers were created, with the drummer and the trumpeter playing at their head. Ivan burst out laughing.

"I declare," said he, "that's clever! How it will amuse the girls!"

"Well," said the devilkin, "let me go now."

"No," says he, "I am going to make them out of chaff; else good seed will be wasted. Show me how to change them back to the sheaf again. I'm going to thresh it."

And the devilkin said:—

"Repeat, 'Let every soldier be a straw. 'Tis my slave's decree that a sheaf thou be.'"

Ivan said this and the sheaf came back. And again the devilkin began to plead.

"Now let me go," said he.

"All right!"

Ivan seized him by the legs, held him in his hand, and pulled him from the fork.

"God be with you!" said Ivan; and as soon as he said "*s Bogom*," the devilkin plunged into the earth like a stone into water; only the hole was left.

Ivan went home; and at home he found his other brother, Taras, and his wife, sitting down to supper. Taras had failed to pay his debts, had fled from his creditors, and come home to his father. As soon as he saw Ivan, he said:—

"Well, now that I'm dead broke, keep me and my wife."

"All right," said Ivan, "stay with us."

Ivan took off his kaftan, and sat down to table.

But the merchant's wife said:—

"I can't eat with a fool. He smells of perspiration!"

So Taras said:—

"Ivan, you smell strong; go and eat in the entry."

"Well, all right," said Ivan; and, taking some bread, he went out into the yard: "It's about time for me to go to pasture, anyway."

CHAPTER V

THAT night Taras's devilkin, who also accomplished his job, came, according to agreement, to help his comrades to get the better of Ivan the fool. He came to the fallow; he searched and searched for his comrades. No sign of them anywhere; he found only a hole. So he went to the meadow; in the swamp he found the tail, and in the rye-stubble-field he found the other hole.

"Well," he said to himself, "some ill must have befallen my comrades. I must take their place and tackle the fool."

The devilkin went to look for Ivan. But Ivan had already left the field for the woods, to cut down trees.

The brothers had begun to find it crowded living together, and they bade the fool prepare lumber and build them new houses.

The devilkin hastened to the forest, crept into the knots, and began to hinder Ivan from falling the trees. Ivan under-cut a tree so that it should fall in a clear space; it began to fall. The mischief got into the tree; it fell in the wrong direction and became entangled in the branches.

Ivan got his cant-hook and tried to free the tree, and at last brought it to the ground. He tried to fall another; again the same thing occurred. He struggled and struggled, and with great difficulty succeeded. He took hold of a third; again the same story. Ivan had expected to cut down a half-hundred saplings, and he had not hewed down a dozen; and it was already night, and Ivan was tired out. The steam arose from him, spread through the forest like a fog; but still he would not leave off. He under-cut still another tree; his back was almost broken; and, as he had no more strength, he drove the ax into the tree, and sat down to rest.

The devilkin perceived that Ivan had ceased working; and he rejoiced.

"Well," he said to himself, "he is tired out; he will give it up. I, too, will rest now."

He seated himself astride of a limb, and chuckled. But Ivan got up, pulled out the ax, swung it, and as he hacked on the other side, the tree all at once began to crack, and fell heavily. The devilkin was not prepared for this, and had no time to get his leg out of the way; the branch broke, and nipped the devilkin by the paw. Ivan began to lop away the branches, and lo! there was a live devilkin! He was amazed.

"Hallo!" said he, "what a nasty thing! Are you here again?"

"I am another one," said he; "I have been at your brother Taras's."

"Well, whoever you are, it will be all the same with you."

Ivan flourished his ax and was about to strike him with the ax-head, but the devilkin begged for mercy.

"Don't strike me," said he, "and I will do for you whatever you wish."

"Well, then, what can you do?"

"I can make you as much money," says he, "as you wish."

"All right," says he; "do so."

And the devilkin began to show him how:—

"Take some oak leaves from this oak, and rub them in your hands. Gold will fall to the ground."

Ivan took the leaves, rubbed them, and gold fell out.

"This is good," says he, "to amuse children with, when they have leisure time."

"Let me go," says the devilkin.

"All right!"

Ivan took his cant-hook and set the devilkin free.

"God be with you!" said he, and as soon as he said the words, "*Bog s Toboï*," the devilkin plunged under the earth, like a stone into the water; only the hole was left.

CHAPTER VI

The brothers built houses, and began to live apart. But Ivan got in his crops, brewed beer, and invited his

brothers to a revel; but they refused to come as Ivan's guests.

"Have n't we seen a peasant revel?" they said.

Ivan entertained the peasant men and women; and he himself drank till he grew tipsy, and went into the street to the singers.[1] Ivan went up to the singers, and bade the women sing a song in his honor.

"I will give you," says he, "what you never saw in your lives before."

The women laughed, and began to sing a song in his honor. They finished their song and dance in his praise, and said: —

"Now, then, give it to us."

"I will bring it to you immediately," said he. He took his seed-basket and hastened out to the forest. The women made sport of him. "What a fool!" they cried, and they forgot all about him.

But lo! Ivan came running back, bringing his seed-basket full of something. "Shall I distribute it, or not?"

"Distribute it!"

Ivan took a handful of gold, and flung it among the women. Batyushki! The women sprang to pick it up; the muzhiks scrambled after it — they each tried to snatch it from the other — they carry it off. One old woman was almost crushed to death. Ivan burst out laughing.

"Oh, you fools!" said he, "why have you crushed the old grandmother? Be calmer, and I will give you more."

He began to scatter more. The people crowded around; Ivan emptied his whole seed-basket. They still begged for more.

But Ivan said: —

"That 's all; another time I 'll give you some more. Now for a dance. Sing us your songs!"

The women began to sing their songs.

"Your songs," said he, "are no good."

"What kind of ones are better?" they asked.

[1] *Khorovodui*; the band, or *ulitsa*, of village lads and lasses who dance and sing at festivals.

"Well, I 'll show you," says he, "in a little while."

He went to the barn, pulled out a sheaf, threshed it, stood it up, dragged it on the ground.

"Now," said he, "slave, now decree that it shall be a sheaf no more, but every straw a soldier." [1]

The sheaf fell apart, the soldiers stood forth, the drums and trumpets played.

Ivan commanded the soldiers to sing some songs; he came with them up the street. The people were amazed. The soldiers sang their songs, and then Ivan led them back to the barn; but he commanded that no one should follow him, and turned the soldiers into a sheaf again, and flung it on the pile.

He went home, and lay down to sleep in the stable.

CHAPTER VII

In the morning the elder brother, Semyon the warrior, who had heard about these doings, came to Ivan.

"Show me," said he, "where you got soldiers, and where you have taken them."

"But what good," says he, "will it do you?"

"Why do you ask? With soldiers, everything can be done. One can win a kingdom for one's self."

Ivan was amazed.

"Really?" said he; "why did n't you say so long ago? I will make you as many as you wish. It 's well the girl and I put aside a good many."

Ivan took his brother to the barn, and said: —

"Look, I will make them; but you must march them away, for, if we have to feed them, then they will eat up the whole village in a day."

Semyon promised to march the soldiers away, and Ivan began to make them. He thumped a sheaf on the barn floor — a squad appeared! He thumped another

[1] "*Sdyelaï kholop*
Chtob buil nye snop
A kazhdaya solomnika — soldat."

— another squad. He made so many of them that they filled the whole field.

"Well, will that be enough?"

Semyon was delighted, and said: —

"That 'll be enough. Thank you, Ivan."

"All right," says he; "if you need any more, come back, and I will make some more. We have a great deal of straw this season."

Semyon the warrior immediately gave orders to his army, drew them up in proper order, and went off to make war.

Hardly had Semyon gone when Taras the pot-bellied made his appearance — he also had heard of yesterday's doings, and he began to beg his brother.

"Show me where you get gold money. If I had such an abundance of free money, I would with that money get in money from all over the world."

Ivan was amazed.

"Really? You should have told me long ago. I will make you as much as you like."

His brother was delighted.

"Give me only three basketfuls."

"All right," said he, "let us go to the woods; but put in the horse — it 'll be too much for you to lug."

They went to the forest; Ivan began to rub the oak leaves. He made a great heap.

"Is that enough, or not?"

Taras was delighted.

"Enough for now," says he. "Thanks, Ivan."

"All right," says he. "If you need more, come to me, and I will rub some more for you; plenty of leaves are left."

Taras gathered up a whole cartful, and went off to trade.

Both brothers went off, and Semyon began to make war, and Taras to trade. And Semyon conquered for himself a tsardom, and Taras made a vast heap of money in trade.

The brothers met, and told each other whence Semyon got his soldiers, and Taras his money.

And Semyon said to his brother: —

"I," said he, "have conquered for myself a tsardom; and I might live well, only — I have not enough money to keep my soldiers."

And Taras said: —

"And I," said he, "have gathered together a great heap of money; but," said he, "there's one trouble, there is no one to guard my money."

And Semyon said: —

"Let us go," said he, "to our brother. I will bid him make some more soldiers — I will give you enough to guard your money, but you must bid him rub enough money for me to sustain my soldiers."

And they went to Ivan.

They went to Ivan, and Semyon said: —

"I have n't enough soldiers, brother," said he; "make me some more soldiers; change at least two ricks into soldiers."

Ivan shook his head.

"No use," said he; "I am not going to make you any more soldiers."

"But how is that?" said he. "You promised me you would."

"I know I promised," said he; "but I will not make any more."

"But why, you fool, won't you make any more?"

"Well, because your soldiers killed a man. The other day I was plowing by the road, and I saw a baba carrying along the road a coffin, and she was wailing. I asked her, 'Who is dead?' She said, 'Semyon's soldiers have killed my husband in the war.' I thought that soldiers were for singing songs, but they have put a man to death. I will give you no more."

And thus he persisted, and refused to make any more soldiers.

Taras now began to implore Ivan to make some more gold money for him.

Ivan snook his head.

"No use," said he, "I will not rub any more."

"Well, but how is this?" said Taras. "You promised me you would."

"I promised," said he, "but I will not make any more."

"But why, you fool, will you not make any more?"

"Well, because your gold pieces have robbed Mikharlovna of her cow!"

"How have they robbed her?"

"In this way they have robbed her: Mikharlovna had a cow, her children drank milk; but lately her children have come to me to beg milk. And I said to them, 'Where is your cow?' They said, 'Taras, the pot-bellied overseer, came along, gave our mamushka three gold pieces, and she let him have the cow; now we have no milk to drink.' I thought that you wanted to play with the gold pieces, but you have robbed the children of their cow; I will not give you any more."

And the fool was firm, and would give no more. And so the brothers went away.

The brothers went away, and began to plan how to help their misfortune. Semyon said: —

"See here, this is what we'll do: you give me money to maintain my soldiers, and I will give you half my tsardom, with soldiers to guard your money."

Taras agreed. So the brothers went shares, and both became tsars, and both were rich.

CHAPTER VIII

But Ivan lived at home, supported his father and mother, worked with the dumb girl in the field.

Now, it happened one day that Ivan's old watch-dog[1] fell sick, grew mangy, and almost died. Ivan was sorry for him; got some bread from the dumb girl, put it in his cap, carried it to the dog, and threw it to him. But the cap was torn, and a little root fell with the bread.

The old dog swallowed it with the bread. And as soon as the dog had swallowed the root, he jumped up, began to frisk around, to bark, to wag his tail, and got well.

[1] *Sobaka dvornaya*, yard-dog.

The father and mother saw this and were amazed.

"How," said they, "did you cure the dog?"

And Ivan said: —

"I had two little roots, — they will cure any pain, — and the dog swallowed one of them."

And it happened about this time that the Tsar's daughter fell ill; and the Tsar published through all cities and towns, that whoever should cure her should be rewarded; and, if he were unmarried, that he should receive, in addition, the Tsar's daughter in marriage. The proclamation was made also in Ivan's village.

Ivan's father and mother called him in, and said to him, "Have you heard what the Tsar proclaims? You have said that you have a little root; make haste, and cure the Tsar's daughter. You will win good luck for life."

"All right," said he.

And Ivan got ready to start; they spruced him up.

Ivan went out on the door-step; he sees standing there a beggar woman, with a crippled hand.

"I have heard," said she, "that you can cure folks. Cure my hand, for now I cannot put on my own shoes."

And Ivan said: —

"All right."

He took out the little root and gave it to the beggar woman and bade her swallow it. The beggar woman swallowed it and became cured; she began at once to use her hand.

Ivan's father and mother came out to go with him to the Tsar. When they learned that Ivan had given away his last rootlet, and had nothing to cure the Tsar's daughter with, his father and mother began to upbraid him.

"You had pity on the beggar woman," said they, "but on the Tsar's daughter you had no pity."

Ivan began to feel sorry for the Tsar's daughter also. He harnessed the horse, spread straw in the cart, and started.

"Now, where are you going, fool?"

"To cure the Tsar's daughter."

"Yes, but see here: you have nothing to cure her with."

"It 's all right," said he; and he started up the horse.

He came to the Tsar's palace; and, as soon as he mounted the steps, the Tsar's daughter got well.

The Tsar was overjoyed, commanded Ivan to be brought to him. He clothed him and decorated him. "Be my son-in-law!" said he.

"All right," said Ivan.

And Ivan married the Tsarevna. And soon the Tsar died, and Ivan became Tsar.

Thus all three of the brothers were tsars.

CHAPTER IX

THE three brothers lived and reigned.[1]

The eldest brother, Semyon the warrior, got along well. With his straw soldiers he collected real soldiers. He commanded that every ten houses throughout his whole tsardom should furnish a soldier, and that this soldier should be tall in stature, and white in body, and clean in face. And he collected many such soldiers, and drilled them all. And when any one contradicted him in anything, he immediately sent these soldiers, and he did whatever he pleased. And all began to fear him.

And life was pleasant to him. Whatever he fancied, and whatever his eyes rested on, became his. He would send soldiers, and they would seize and bring to him all he wanted.

Taras the pot-bellied also got along well. He did not waste the money he had got from Ivan, but he made great additions to it. He also set up fine arrangements in his tsardom. He kept his money in coffers, and he exacted money from the people. He exacted money for their serfs,[2] and for their walking and driving, and for their bark shoes,[3] and for their leg-wrappers, and for their

[1] *Tsarstvovali.* [2] *Dushi;* literally, souls.
[3] *Lapti,* shoes made of linden bark.

flounces. And whatever he fancied was his. For money they would bring him anything; and they were glad to work for him because every one must have money.

And Ivan the fool did not live poorly. As soon as he had buried his father-in-law, he took off all his royal raiment and gave it to his wife to lock up in the chest; he dressed in his hempen shirt again, put on his drawers and bark shoes, and betook himself to work.

"It is tiresome to me," said he; "I am growing fat, and I have no appetite, and I can't sleep."

He brought his father and mother, and the dumb girl, and began once more to work.

And they said to him: —

"But, don't you see, you are the Tsar!"

"Well," said he, "even a Tsar must eat."

The minister came to him, and said: —

"We have no money to pay salaries."

"All right," said he; "if you have none, then don't pay them."

"But they won't serve."

"All right," said he; "let them not serve. They will have all the more time to work. Let them carry out manure; they have heaped up a lot."

They came to Ivan to hold a trial. One said, "He stole my money."

And Ivan said: —

"All right! that shows he needed it."

All perceived that Ivan was a fool; and his wife said to him: —

"They say you are a fool."

"All right!" said he.

Ivan's wife thought and thought; but she also was a fool.[1]

"What is the use," she asked herself, "for me to go against my husband? Where the needle goes the thread follows."

She took off her royal raiment, locked it up in the chest, went to the dumb girl, and learned how to work.

[1] *Dura*, fool, does not exactly express it, any more than its masculine, *durak*. Crazy, mad, is the adjective that corresponds.

When she had learned how to work, she began to help her husband.

And all the wise left Ivan's tsardom; only fools were left. No one had money. They lived, they worked, they supported themselves, and supported good men.

CHAPTER X

THE old devil waited and waited for tidings from the devilkins, about their success in destroying the three brothers; but no tidings came. He himself went to investigate. He searched and searched, but could find nothing of them except the three holes.

"Well," says he to himself, "plainly they did not get the better of them. I must tackle it myself."

He started to find the brothers, but they were not in their old places. He found them in their different kingdoms. All three are alive, reigning as tsars. This seemed outrageous to the old devil.

"Well," says he, "I had better take hold of this job myself."

He went first of all to Tsar Semyon. He went not in his own shape, but changed into a vaïvode,[1] came to Tsar Semyon.

"Tsar Semyon, I have heard," said he, "that you are a great warrior; and I know that business well. I wish to enter your service."

The Tsar Semyon began to question him, and, seeing that he was a man of sense, took him into his service.

The new vaïvode began to show Tsar Semyon how to collect a powerful army.

"First," said he, "it is necessary to collect more soldiers; and now," said he, "many people are idly wandering up and down your tsardom. It is necessary," said he, "to recruit all the young men, without exception; then you will have an army five times as large as before. Secondly, it is necessary to get new rifles and cannon. I will get for you rifles which will shoot a hun-

[1] Russian *voyevoda*, army leader; also written in English, waywode.

dred bullets at a time so that they will fly about like peas. And I will get cannon which will consume with fire either man, or horse, or wall — they will burn everything up."

Tsar Semyon listened to his new vaïvode, and ordered all the young men, without distinction, to be taken as soldiers; and he established new manufactories. He made new rifles and cannon, and immediately went to war with a neighboring Tsar.

As soon as the army came out to meet them, Tsar Semyon ordered his soldiers to let fly at it with bullets, and to hurl fire at it from the cannon, and at one blow he disabled and burned up half the army. The neighboring Tsar was frightened, he humbled himself and surrendered his tsardom. Tsar Semyon was overjoyed.

"Now," said he, "I am going to attack the Tsar of India."

But the Tsar of India had heard about Tsar Semyon, and had adopted all of his inventions; yes, and, moreover, added some of his own. The Tsar of India not only began to take as soldiers young men, but also enlisted all the single women as soldiers; and his army became even larger than Tsar Semyon's. And he copied from Tsar Semyon all his rifles and cannon, and, moreover, invented a method of flying through the air, and launching explosive bombshells from above.

Tsar Semyon went to war against the Tsar of India — he thought to win in battle as before; but the scythe that once cut was dulled; the Tsar of India did not let Semyon's army come within gunshot, but he sent his women soldiers up into the air to launch explosive bombshells upon Semyon's army. The women began to shower bombs from above upon Semyon's army, like borax on cockroaches; all Semyon's army took to flight, and Tsar Semyon was left alone. The Tsar of India took Semyon's tsardom, and Semyon barely escaped with his life.[1]

The old devil finished with this brother, and went to Tsar Taras. He changed into a merchant, and settled

[1] *Kuda glaza glyadyat;* literally, whither the eyes look.

in Taras's tsardom; he established a business house, began to pay out his money. The merchant began by paying high prices for every sort of thing, and all the people flocked to the merchant — to make money. And the people made so much money that they all paid their debts, and began to pay their taxes promptly.

Tsar Taras was delighted.

"Thanks to the merchant," said he to himself, "now I shall get still more money — my life will be still better."

And Tsar Taras endeavored to make new plans; he began to build a new palace for himself. He notified the people to bring him lumber and stone and to set to work for him; he offered high prices for everything. Tsar Taras thought that, judging by the past, the people would come to work for him in crowds for the money. But lo! they brought all the lumber and stone to the merchant, and all the working-people flocked to him. Tsar Taras raised his offer, but the merchant went still higher. Tsar Taras had much money, but the merchant still more; and the merchant's price was better than the Tsar's. The Tsar's palace was at a standstill; building stopped.

A park had been laid out for Tsar Taras. The autumn came. Taras invited the people to come to him to work in the park — no one came — all the people were engaged in digging a pond for the merchant.

Winter came. Tsar Taras wanted to buy sable furs for a new shuba; he sent out to buy them — his messenger came back, saying: —

"There are no sable furs. The merchant has them all; he gave a higher price, and he has made a carpet out of the sable skins."

Tsar Taras wanted to buy some stallions; he sent out to buy them — his agents returned, saying: —

"The merchant has all the good stallions; they are carrying water to fill up his pond."

All the Tsar's affairs came to a standstill; no one would do anything for him, but they did everything for the merchant; and all they bring him is the merchant's money, which they pay for their taxes.

And the Tsar collected so much money that he had nowhere to put it, and life became wretched. The Tsar had now ceased to make plans — his only concern was to live at all — even this was impossible. He ran short of everything. His cooks and coachmen left him and took service with the merchant. It had now gone so far that he had nothing to eat. If he sent to the bazaar to buy anything — there was nothing to be got; the merchant had bought up everything, and the people brought him only money for taxes!

Tsar Taras was angry, and banished the merchant beyond the frontier; but the merchant settled down on the very frontier and went on as before, all exactly the same; for the sake of the merchant's money they carry everything away from the Tsar to the merchant. It became utterly wretched for the Tsar; for days at a time, there was nothing to eat; the report spread even that the merchant was boasting that he was going to buy the Tsar himself. Tsar Taras became alarmed, and did not know what to do.

Semyon the warrior came to him, and said: —

"Help me! the Tsar of India has conquered me."

But the affairs of Taras the Tsar himself were in a knot.

"I myself," said he, "have not had anything to eat for two days."

CHAPTER XI

The old devil had finished with two of the brothers, and he came to Ivan. The old devil changed into a vaïvode and came to Ivan, and tried to persuade him to form an army.

Said he, "It does not become a Tsar to live without an army. Only give me orders, and I will gather soldiers from your people, and form an army."

Ivan listened to him.

"All right," said he, "form an army; but teach them to sing songs most cleverly. I like that."

The old devil set to work to enlist volunteer soldiers throughout Ivan's dominion. He bade them take service:[1] each recruit would have a measure of vodka[2] and a red cap.

The fools burst into a laugh.

"We have enough brandy," said they, "we make it ourselves; and as for caps, our women will make us as many as you like, even striped ones; yes, and with tassels too!"

And so he got no recruits. The old devil came to Ivan and said:—

"Your fools will not enlist as volunteers; they must be made to enlist."

"All right," said he, "make them enlist."

And the old devil gave orders that all the fools should be enrolled as soldiers, and whoever did not come, Ivan would put to death.

The fools came to the vaïvode, and said:—

"You tell us that if we will not go as soldiers, the Tsar will put us to death; but you do not tell us what will happen to us in the army. They say that even soldiers are killed."

"Yes, but not without reason."

The fools heard this, and were obstinate.

"We will not go," they said. "It is better for us to wait for death at home. Even thus it is not to be escaped."

"You are fools, fools!" said the old devil; "soldiers may get killed, or may not; but if you don't come, Ivan the Tsar will assuredly put you to death."

The fools pondered a little; they went to Ivan the fool to ask him.

"A vaïvode," said they, "appeared and commanded us all to go as soldiers. 'If you go as soldiers,' said he, 'you may be killed, or may not; but if you don't come, then the Tsar Ivan will assuredly put you to death.' Is this true?"

Ivan burst into a laugh.

[1] *Lbui brit*, shave their foreheads.

[2] A *shtof;* eight of these measures make a *vyedro*, or 2.70 gallons.

"How," said he, "can I, who am one, put you all to death? If I were not a fool, I would explain it for you; but now I don't understand it myself."

"Then," say they, "we will not go."

"All right," says he, "don't go."

The fools went to the vaïvode, and refused to enlist.

The old devil saw that his work was not prospering. He went to the Tarakan[1]-tsar: he went in disguise.

"Come on," said he, "let us make war on Ivan the Tsar. He has not much money, but he has grain and cattle, and all sorts of good things."

The Tarakan-tsar prepared to make war; he collected a great army; procured rifles and cannon and crossed the frontier, began to march into Ivan's dominion.

Folks came to Ivan and said:—

"The Tarakan-tsar is marching to make war upon us."

"All right," says he, "let him come."

The Tarakan-tsar crossed the frontier with his army, and sent out scouts to reconnoiter, and find Ivan's army. They searched and searched; but there was no army! They waited and waited for one to appear somewhere! But there was no sign of an army — nobody to fight with! The Tarakan-tsar sent to seize the villages. The soldiers came to one village. The fools — men and women — ran out and gazed at the soldiers — in astonishment.

The soldiers began to rob the fools of their grain and their cattle. The fools gave them up, and no one offered resistance.

The soldiers came to another village — the same thing happened there. The soldiers went on for one day; they went on for another day; everywhere always the same thing: everything was given up, no one offered to resist, but instead they invited the soldiers to live with them.

"If life is so wretched over on your side, dear friends," they say, "come and live with us!"

The soldiers marched and marched, — still no army! And all the people lived by feeding themselves and

[1] *Uarakan* is a cockroach, or beetle.

others; and they offered no resistance, but invited the soldiers to live with them.

It became dull work to the soldiers; they returned to their Tarakan-tsar, and said: —

"We cannot fight here; lead us to some other place. The war would have been good, good; but this is like cutting kissel-jelly. We cannot make war any longer here."

The Tarakan-tsar was angry, and commanded the soldiers to overrun the whole tsardom; to pick quarrels; to set villages, houses, grain, on fire; to kill the cattle.

"If you do not obey my command," said he, "all of you," said he, "I will put you to death."

The soldiers were frightened; they began to carry out the ukase on the tsardom. They began to burn houses, grain; to kill the cattle. Still the fools offered no resistance, but only wept. The old men wept, the old women wept, the young children wept.

"Why," said they, "do you injure us? Why," said they, "do you waste good things? If you need anything, you had better take it for yourselves!"

It seemed outrageous to the soldiers. They went no farther, and the whole army took to its heels.

CHAPTER XII

So the old devil also went off — he could not catch Ivan by his soldiers.

The old devil changed into a fine gentleman,[1] and came to live in Ivan's dominions;[2] he made up his mind to catch him by means of money, as he had Taras.

"I wish," said he, "to do you a good turn, — to teach you how to be wise. I am going to build a house among you, and establish a business."

"All right," says Ivan, "live here."

The fine gentleman spent the night, and in the morn-

[1] *Gospodin.* [2] *Tsarstvo.*

ing went to the public square, took a great bag of gold, and sheets of paper, and said: —

"You live, all of you," said he, "like swine; I want to teach you how you ought to live. Build me," said he, "a house on this plan. You work, and I will show you how; and I will pay you in gold coin."

And he showed them the gold. The fools wondered. They had no money in manufactures, and they bartered among themselves one thing for another, and paid in labor. They wondered at the gold, and said: —

"They are pretty little trinkets."

And they began to exchange their produce and work for the gentleman's gold pieces. The old devil began to be free with his gold, as he had in Taras's case; and they began to exchange all sorts of things for his gold, and to do all sorts of work for it.

The old devil was overjoyed; he said to himself: "My scheme is coming on excellently. Now I am going to ruin the fool as I did Taras; and I shall buy him absolutely, body and soul."[1]

As soon as the fools got their gold coins, they gave them to their women for necklaces; all the girls twined them into their tresses. And even the children in the streets began to use them as toys to play with. All had a quantity, and they ceased taking any more. But still the fine gentleman's mansion was not half completed, and he had not as yet provided enough grain and cattle for the year. And the gentleman publicly invited the people to work for him, to cart him grain, to bring him cattle; for all kinds of things, and for all kinds of work, he would give much gold.

But no one came to work, and no one brought anything. Only now and then a lad or a little girl happened along to exchange an egg for a gold piece, but no one else came, and he soon had nothing to eat.

The fine gentleman began to get famished; went through a village to buy himself a dinner. He made his way into one dvor; offered gold for a hen; the woman of the house refused it, saying: —

[1] *S potrokhom*, with his inwards!

"I have a lot of these things."

He made his way into a poor peasant woman's hut,[1] to buy a herring, and offered a gold piece.

"I don't need it, kind sir," said she. "I have no children," said she, "to play with such a thing; and I have already got three pieces as curiosities."

He made his way into a muzhik's to get bread; the muzhik also refused the money.

"I don't need it," said he. "But if you are begging in Christ's name,[2] just wait till I tell my woman to cut you off a slice of bread."

The devil spat, and hastened away from the muzhik. He could not stomach that *For Christ's sake;*[2] even to hear the words hurt him worse than a knife.

And so he got no bread.

All had sufficient; wherever the old devil went, no one would give him anything for money; but all said: "*Bring something else*," or "*Come and work*," or "*Take it, in Christ's name.*"[2]

But the devil had nothing except money, and no desire to work; and the *Christ's sake* he cannot stomach. The old devil grew angry.

"What do you need more," he asked, "when I offer you money? You can buy everything for gold, and hire every kind of workman."

The fools would not listen to him.

"No," said they, "we don't need it. No one here pays taxes or wages. What should we want of money?"

The old devil went to bed without any supper.

This affair was reported to Ivan the fool. Folks came to ask him:—

"What are we to do? This fine gentleman appeared among us: he likes to eat and drink good things; he likes to dress neatly; but he does not like to work, and he does not ask alms in Christ's name;[2] but he offers only gold pieces everywhere. Until we got enough of them, we gave him what he wanted for them; but now

[1] *Bobuilka.*

[2] *Radi Khrista*, for Christ's sake, the common plea of a Russian beggar.

we don't give him any more. What are we to do with him? He will be dying of starvation."

Ivan listened.

"All right," said he. "We must support him. Let him go from dvor to dvor as the shepherd goes."

No help for it: the old devil began to go from dvor to dvor. He came in due time to Ivan's house.

The old devil came in to dinner; and at Ivan's the dumb girl was getting it ready.

Those who were the laziest had often deceived her. They would leave their work unfinished and hurry in to dinner before the rest, and eat up all the kasha-gruel. And the dumb girl had learned to recognize the sluggard by his hands. Any one who had callous places on his hands, she would seat at the table; but the one who had not, she gave the scraps to.

The old devil slipped in behind the table; but the dumb girl seized him by the hands and examined them closely; there were no callous places, and the hands were clean, smooth, and the nails were long. The dumb girl grunted, and pulled the devil away from the table.

But Ivan's wife said to him: —

"Do not be offended, my fine gentleman; my sister-in-law does not allow those who have not callous hands to come to table..... Here, have patience; the men are almost done eating, then you shall have what is left."

The old devil was affronted because at the Tsar's they wanted him to feed like the pigs. He said to Ivan: —

"It is a foolish law you have in your dominions — that all people must work with their hands. You invented it in your stupid way. Why should people work with their hands alone? Do you realize in what way men of intellect work?"

But Ivan said: —

"How should we fools know? We always do the most of our work with our hands and with our backs."

"That is because you are fools. But I," said he, "will teach you how to work with your brains; then you will know that head-work is more profitable than hand-work."

Ivan was amazed.

"Well," said he, "we are not called fools for nothing."

And the old devil said, "But it is not easy," says he, "to work with the brain. Here you did not allow me to eat with you because my hands were not calloused, but you do not understand that it is a hundred times more difficult to work with the brain. Sometimes the head even splits."

Ivan grew thoughtful.

"Why, then, friend," said he, "do you torment yourself so? Is it pleasant when the head splits? You would much better do easy work — with the hands and the back."

But the devil said: —

"Why should I bother myself to take pity on you fools? If I did not bother myself, you would be fools forever. But I have worked with my brains, and now I am going to teach you."

Ivan was amazed.

"Teach us," said he, "and then when the hands get tired out, then change them for head-work."

And the devil promised to teach them.

And Ivan proclaimed throughout all his dominions, that a fine gentleman had come who would teach all how to work with the brains, and said that more could be produced with their brains than with their hands, and that the people should come and be taught.

There was in Ivan's tsardom a high tower, and steep stairs led up to it; and on the top there was a platform. And Ivan took the gentleman there, so that he might be in sight of all.

The gentleman stood on the tower, and began to speak from it. And the fools gathered to see him. The fools thought that the gentleman was going to show them how to work with the brain apart from the hands. But the old devil only taught them in words how it was possible to live without work.

The fools could not understand at all. They gazed and gazed, and then went in different directions to their labors.

The old devil stood one day on the tower, stood for another day, and talked all the time. He began to get hungry. But the fools thought it needless to bring bread to the tower. They thought that if he could work better with his head than with his hands, then it would be mere play for the head to provide bread.

And the old devil stood for still another day on the platform, talking all the time. And the people would come up and look and stare, and then go away again.

And Ivan asked: "Well, has the gentleman begun to work with his head yet?"

"Not yet," said the people; "he is still spouting away." The old devil stood a second day on the platform, and he began to grow weak. He staggered once, and thumped his head against the post. One fool noticed it, and told Ivan's wife; and Ivan's wife hurried out to her husband, in the fallow field.

"Let us go," says she, "and look; they say that the gentleman is beginning to work with his head."

Ivan was surprised.

"Really?" said he. He turned the horse round and went to the tower.

By the time he reached the tower the old devil was thoroughly weak from hunger, and began to totter and whacked his head against the post. And just as Ivan came, the devil stumbled, fell with a thundering noise down the stairs, heels over head; he counted all the steps.

"Well," says Ivan, "the fine gentleman told the truth when he said that sometimes the head splits; that's its kind of callosities. From such work the head gets covered with bumps."

The old devil came bumping down the stairs, and thumped against the ground. Ivan was just going to see whether he had accomplished much work, when, suddenly, the earth opened, and the old devil fell through the earth; only the hole was left.

Ivan scratched his head. "Ah, ha!" says he. "What a nasty thing! There he was again! Must have been the father. What a healthy one!"

Ivan is still living, and all the people are thronging to his dominions; and his brothers have come to him, and he supports them. Whoever comes, and says, "Give us food," — "All right," says he; "you're welcome! we have plenty of everything."

There is only one regulation in his tsardom: Whoever has callous hands, comes to the table; and who has not, gets what is left.

THE STORY OF YEMILYAN AND THE EMPTY DRUM

(1891)

YEMILYAN lived out as a day-laborer. Once upon a time he was on his way to the meadow where his work was, and lo and behold! a frog leaped out before him. He almost set his foot on it. But he stepped over it. Suddenly he heard some one calling to him from behind. He looked round and saw a beautiful girl standing there, and she said to him:—

"Yemilyan, why are you not married?"

"How could I be married, my pretty maid. Look at me; I have nothing at all. No one would take me."

"Well," said the girl, "take me for a wife."

The girl greatly pleased Yemilyan; said he:—

"I should like to; but where should we live?"

"That is something to think about," said the girl. "Hard work and little sleep is all that is required; but we can find clothes and food anywhere."

"Very good, I'm agreed; let us get married. Where shall we go?"

"Let us go to the city."

Yemilyan and the girl went to the city. The girl took him to a little cottage at the farther end of the city, and they were married and lived there.

One time the voyevode came to the city. He passed by Yemilyan's cottage, and Yemilyan's wife went out to look at him. When the voyevode saw her he was amazed.

"Where did such a beauty as that come from?"

He reined in his horse, and summoned Yemilyan's wife, and began to question her.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"The wife of the peasant Yemilyan," said she.

"How did it happen," said he, "that such a beautiful woman as you married a peasant? You ought to be a princess."

"Thank you," said she, "for your flattering remark, but I am satisfied with my husband."

The voyevode talked with her awhile, and then rode on his way. He reached his palace. But he could not help thinking of Yemilyan's wife. He lay awake all night long, planning how he might get her away from Yemilyan. He could not think of any way of doing it. He summoned his servants, and bade them devise some way. And the voyevode's servants said to him: —

"Take Yemilyan as your workman," said they. "We'll work him to death; his wife will be a widow, and then you can have her."

So the voyevode did; he sent for Yemilyan to come to him as a dvornik, and offered him a house for him and his wife.

The messengers came and told Yemilyan their story. But Yemilyan's wife said: —

"Very good," said she. "Go. Work there during the daytime, but at night return to me."

Yemilyan went. When he reached the palace, the voyevode's steward said to him: —

"Why have you come alone, without your wife?"

"Why should I bring her? Her place is at home."

In the voyevode's courtyard they gave him so much work to do that two men could not have accomplished it. Yemilyan took hold of the work, but it seemed hopeless for him to finish it. But lo and behold! when evening came it was all done. The steward saw that he had finished it, and gave him four times as much for the next day. Yemilyan went home and found the house all neatly swept and in order; the fire was burning in the stove, the baking and boiling were under way. His wife was sitting at the table sewing and waiting for her

husband. When he entered she met him, got supper ready, and, after he had had all he wanted to eat and drink, she began to ask him about his work.

"Well," said he, "it went badly. They gave me more than I had strength to do. They are going to kill me with work."

"Now, then," said she, "don't you worry about your work, and don't look back and don't look forward to see if much has been done and much remains to be done. Only work. All will come out right."

Yemilyan went to bed. The next morning he went to his work again. He took hold of it, and not once did he look round. And lo and behold! it was all done by four o'clock, and while it was still light he went home for the night. And though they kept adding to his tasks, still Yemilyan always managed to finish it up and go home for the night.

Thus passed a week. The voyevode's servants perceived that they could not overcome the muzhik by "black work." They began to impose handiwork upon him, but this also proved vain. Carpentry work and mason work and the art of thatching — whatever they imposed upon him, that Yemilyan got done in ample time for him to go home and spend the night with his wife. Thus passed a second week. The voyevode summoned his servants, and said: —

"I should like to know if I feed you for doing nothing? Here two weeks have passed and I can't see that you have done anything at all. You were going to put Yemilyan out of the way for me, but from the window I see him going home every afternoon, singing songs. I should like to know if you are scheming to turn me into ridicule?"

The servants began to justify themselves: —

"We tried with all our might," said they, "to kill him off by 'black work,' but we could not do anything with him. Everything we gave him to work at he worked out, and we could not tire him. Then we gave him handiwork to do, thinking he would not have wit enough to do it, but in this too we failed to get him. It

is like magic. As soon as he touches anything it is done. It must be that either he or his wife practises some witchcraft. We are tired to death of him. And now we are trying to think of something that he can't do. We have decided to make him build a new cathedral in one day. So will you summon Yemilyan and command him to build a new cathedral opposite your palace in one day? And if he does not have it done, then we will have his head cut off as a punishment."

The voyevode sent for Yemilyan.

"Well," said he, "this is my command. Build me a new cathedral on the square opposite my palace, so that it shall be all done to-morrow evening. If you get it built, I will reward you; if you fail, I shall punish you."

Yemilyan heard the command, he turned round and went home.

"Well," said he to himself, "that's the end of me."

He went to his wife and said:—

"Get yourself ready, wife; we must make our escape somewhere or other, else we shall be ruined."

"Why," said she, "are you such a coward that you must run away?"

"How can I help being?" said he. "The voyevode has ordered me to come to-morrow and build a new cathedral all in one day. And if I don't get it built, he threatens to cut off my head. The only thing left to do is to escape while there is time."

But his wife would not hear to this.

"The voyevode has many servants. They will catch us anywhere. You can't escape from him. But since you have the power, you must obey him."

"Yes, but how can one obey him, if one has not the power?"

"Listen, batyushka. Don't you worry. Eat your supper and go to bed. In the morning get up a little earlier than usual; you 'll have it all done."

Yemilyan went to bed; his wife wakened him.

"Go," said she, "build your cathedral as quickly as possible. Here are nails and a hammer; there 'll be work enough for you for the day."

Yemilyan went to the city; when he got there the new cathedral was already standing in the midst of the square, almost finished. Yemilyan went to work to finish it; by evening it was all complete.

The voyevode woke up, he looked out of his palace window, and saw that the cathedral was already built. Yemilyan was walking up and down, here and there driving in nails. And the voyevode was not pleased to see the cathedral; he was vexed because he had nothing to punish Yemilyan for, and could not take away his wife. So he called his servants again.

"Yemilyan has accomplished his task; there is nothing to punish him for. This task," said he, "was too small for him. Something craftier must be thought up. Put your wits to work, or else I will punish you instead of him."

And the voyevode's servants suggested that he should command Yemilyan to make a river which should flow round the palace, and that ships should be sailing on it. The voyevode summoned Yemilyan, and laid before him the new task.

"If you are able," said he, "in one night to build a cathedral, then you will be able to do this also. See to it that to-morrow everything be as I have commanded. And if it is not ready, then I will cut off your head."

Yemilyan was more than ever discouraged, and he returned to his wife in a very gloomy frame of mind.

"Why," said his wife, "are you so discouraged? Have you some new task imposed on you?"

Yemilyan told her.

"We must make our escape," said he.

But his wife said:—

"You can't run away; they will catch you everywhere; you must obey."

"Yes, but how can I obey?"

"Well, batyushka, there is nothing to be discouraged about. Eat your supper and go to bed. But get up earlier than usual; everything will be in order."

Yemilyan went to bed and slept. Early in the morning his wife waked him.

"Go," said she, "go to the city, all is ready. You will find one mound only at the harbor. Take your spade and level it off."

Yemilyan started. He reached the city; round the palace was a river, ships were sailing on it. Yemilyan reached the harbor, he saw the uneven place, and began to level it.

The voyevode woke up, he saw a river where no river had been; ships were sailing on it and Yemilyan was leveling a mound with his spade. The voyevode was horror-struck and was not rejoiced at the sight of the river and the ships; but he was vexed because he could not punish Yemilyan. He said to himself: —

"There is no task that he cannot accomplish it. What shall we try now?"

He summoned his servants and proceeded to consult with them.

"Think up some task," said he, "that will be above Yemilyan's powers. For whatever you have so far devised for him, he has done at once, and it is impossible to take his wife from him."

The servants cudgeled their brains, and at last had a bright idea. They came to the voyevode and said: —

"You must summon Yemilyan and say to him: —

"'Go somewhere, you know not where, and bring back something, you know not what.' He won't be able to escape from this. Wherever he goes you will say that he went to the wrong place, and whatever he brings back you will say that he brought back the wrong thing. Then you will be able to punish him and take away his wife."

This pleased the voyevode.

"This time," said he, "you have had a bright idea."

He sent for Yemilyan and said to him: —

"Go somewhere, you know not where, and bring back something, you know not what, and if you don't bring it, I will cut your head off."

Yemilyan went to his wife, and told her what the voyevode had said. His wife put on her thinking-cap.

"Well," said she, "they've been teaching the voyevode something to his own ruin. We must work now wisely."

She sat down, pondered for a while, and then said to her husband: —

"You will have to take a long journey — to our babushka, our grandmother — to the ancient peasant mother — and you must ask for her good-will. And from her you will receive an object; then go straightway to the voyevode, and I shall be there. For now I shall not get out of their hands. They will take me by force, but not for long. If you do all the old babushka commands, you will speedily rescue me."

The wife got her husband ready; she gave him a wallet and gave him a spindle.

"Here, take this," said she, "and give it to her. By this she will know that you are my husband."

She showed him the way. Yemilyan started; he went beyond the city, and he saw some bowmen drilling. Yemilyan stopped and watched them. After the bowmen had practised, they sat down to rest. Yemilyan approached them and asked: —

"Do you know, my brethren, where I must go, not knowing where, to get something, not knowing what?"

The bowmen listened to what he had to say, and they were filled with wonder.

"Who sent you to find out?" they inquired.

"The voyevode," said he.

"No," said they, "we cannot help you."

After Yemilyan had sat a little while, he proceeded on his way.

He went and he went, and at last he came to a forest. In the forest lived the old babushka.

The old woman was sitting in a cottage — the ancient peasant mother — she was spinning flax — and she was weeping. When the old woman saw Yemilyan, she cried out to him: —

"What have you come for?"

Yemilyan gave her the distaff, and told her his wife had sent it to her. And Yemilyan began to tell her all

about his life, how he had married the girl, how he had gone to the city to live, how he had been taken as a dvornik, how he had served the voyevode, how he had built the cathedral and made the river with the ships, and how now the voyevode had commanded him to go somewhere, not knowing where, to get something, he knew not what.

The old woman listened to him and ceased to weep. She began to mutter to herself.

"That is very good," said she, "but sit down, little son, and eat."

Yemilyan ate his fill, and the old woman began to talk with him.

"Here is a little ball," said she; "roll it before you and follow it, wherever it may roll. You will have to go far, even to the sea. When you reach the sea, you will find there a great city. When you enter the city, ask for a night's lodgings at the last house. There you will find what you need."

"But how shall I know it, babushka?"

"Well, when you see what men obey sooner than father and mother, that is what you want; seize on it and take it with you. You will take it to the voyevode, but he will say to you that you have not brought the thing that was required, and then do you say to him: 'Well, if it is not what is wanted it must be broken;' then hit the thing a blow and take it down to the river, break it, and fling it into the water, and then you will recover your wife."

Yemilyan bade the old woman good-by, rolled the little ball ahead of him; it rolled and it rolled, and it took him to the sea, and by the sea was a great city. At the border of the city was a large house. Yemilyan there demanded hospitality for the night; it was granted, and he went to bed. He woke early in the morning and listened; the father was getting up, he called his son and sent him to split kindlings. But the son would not heed; "It is too early as yet," said he, "I shall have time enough." Yemilyan heard the mother get down from the oven and say:—

"Go, little son, your father's bones pain him; would you make him go?"

"There 's plenty of time."

The son made a smacking noise with his lips, and dropped off to sleep again. As soon as he had fallen asleep there was a noise like thunder, and a loud crash in the street. The son leaped down, put on his clothes, and ran down into the street. Yemilyan also jumped down and followed him to see what the son obeyed better than his parents. Yemilyan ran down and saw a man going along the street, carrying a round object and beating on it with sticks, and it rumbled, and the son listened to it. Yemilyan ran closer and examined the object, and saw that it was round like a small tub, and both ends were covered with skin. And he insisted on knowing what it was called.

"A drum," they told him.

Yemilyan was amazed, and asked them to give it to him. They refused to give it to him. So Yemilyan ceased to ask for it, but he walked along following it. He walked all that day, and when the man that had it lay down to sleep, Yemilyan seized his drum and ran off with it.

He ran and he ran, and at last came back to his own city. He expected to see his wife at home, but she was not there.

On the next day they had brought her to the voyevode. Yemilyan went to the voyevode's, and bade them announce him in these words: —

"Here! the man who went he knew not where, has come back, bringing he knows not what."

The voyevode bade Yemilyan to return the next day.

Yemilyan then ordered them to say to the voyevode: —

"I," said he, "have come to-day. I have brought what he bade me bring; let the voyevode come to me or I will come to him."

The voyevode replied: —

"Where did you go?" he asked.

"I don't know," said he.

"And what did you bring with you?"

Yemilyan was about to show it to him, but the voyevode refused to look at it: —

"It 's nothing," said he.

"Yes, it 's nothing," said Yemilyan; "but then one must beat on it, and the devil is in it."

Yemilyan came with the drum and beat on it.

As soon as he began to beat on it, all the voyevode's army came and joined Yemilyan. They saluted him and waited till he should give the word of command.

The voyevode began to shout to his bowmen from the window of his palace, forbidding them to follow Yemilyan. They refused to obey him, and followed Yemilyan. The voyevode perceived this, and ordered them to restore his wife to Yemilyan, and then asked him to give him the drum.

"I cannot," said Yemilyan. "I must beat it," said he, "and throw the scrapings into the river."

Yemilyan went with the drum to the river, and the bowmen followed him. Yemilyan beat the drum by the river, broke it into pieces, and flung them into the river. And all the bowmen scattered in all directions. But Yemilyan took his wife and brought her home. And from that time forth the voyevode ceased to bother him, and he lived long and happily ever after.[1]

[1] This quaint little parable, in which military glory is symbolized as an empty drum, ends with a variation of the popular greeting: *zhit'*, *pozhivat'*, *dobro nazhivat'*, *a khudo prozhivat'*, in which the verb *zhit'*, to live, appears in various guises. It is twice printed in the latest edition of Count Tolstoï's works: in vol. xii. under the title, *Skazka. Iz narodnuikh skazok, sozdannuikh na Volgé ƒ otdalennuiya ot nas vremena.* "Tale: From the Folk Tales originating on the Volga in Far-distant Times."

THE END